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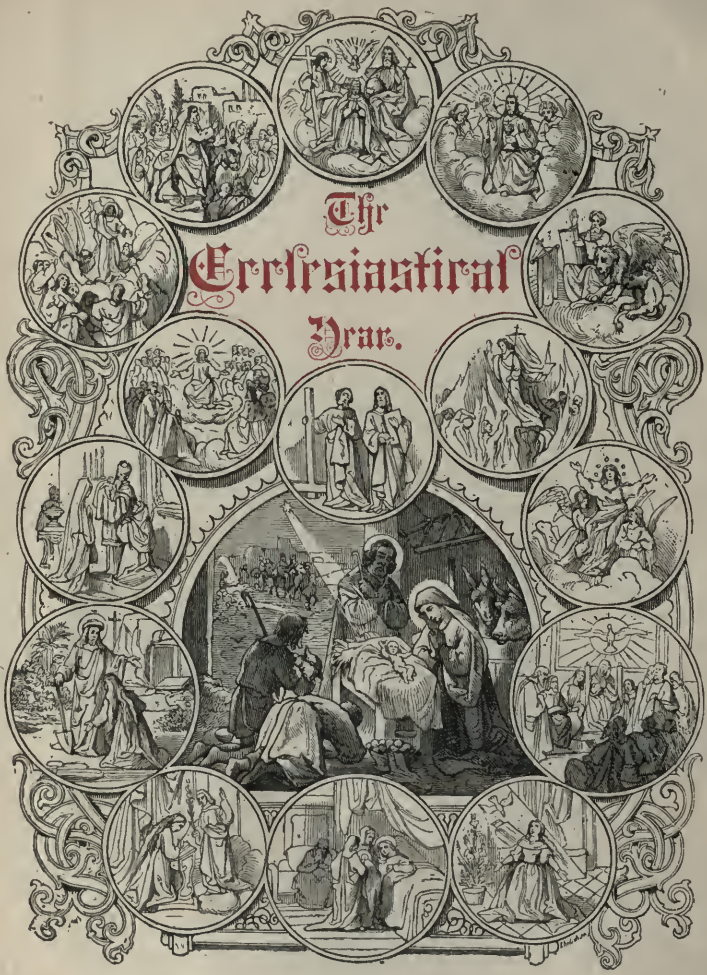

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.
(*Matt.* xxiv. 35.)

Blessed art thou, Simon Bar Jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
(*Matt.* xvi. 17, 18.)

„My flesh is meat indeed: and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, the same

also shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead. He that eateth this bread, shall live forever. John VI. 56—59.

St. Matthäus

St. Johannes

St. Lucas

St. Marcus

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EXPLANATION

OF THE

EPISTLES AND GOSPELS

FOR THE

SUNDAYS, HOLIDAYS AND FESTIVALS

THROUGHOUT

THE ECCLESIASTICAL YEAR,

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

INSTRUCTIONS ON CHRISTIAN FAITH AND MORALS, EXPLANATIONS OF DIFFERENT CEREMONIES AND PRACTICES OF THE CHURCH,

AND

THE LIVES OF MANY SAINTS,

BY

REV. LEONARD GOFFINE,

PRIEST OF THE ORDER OF PREMONSTRATENSIANS.

EDITED AND ENLARGED BY REV. **GEORGE OTT**, DEAN AND PASTOR.

WITH THE APPROBATION OF THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP OF RATISBON.

TRANSLATED FROM THE NEWEST GERMAN EDITION

BY

REV. GERARD M. PILZ, O. S. B.

IN TWO PARTS, PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED.

NEW YORK & CINCINNATI, O.

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1871.

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PREFACE.

THe merits of this devotional work have been so long known and recognized, that few, if any, remarks concerning them are now needed, but it is thought a slight sketch of the author's life may not be out of place at this moment.

Leonard Goffine was born at Cologne on the 6. December 1648, and was received into the Premonstratensian Abbey of Steinfield, Westphalia, July 18., 1669. He labored with admirable zeal for many years in the parishes of Oberstein and Cœsfield, yet finding time to write a number of devotional works, which by their excellent style and manner gained him the esteem even of the Church's adversaries. The present work especially was received with undivided approbation, an approbation which has endured from its first appearance until now, and is now in no ways diminished, having only increased with time, as confirmed by the many editions which have been issued. The varying needs of the times have made additions necessary, and certain doctrines which have excited the particular enmity of outsiders, have been dwelt upon more at length by editors of recent editions, in order that being more clearly understood, they might the more effectually disarm prejudice, but the general arrangement has in nowise been altered.

After laboring with untiring zeal for the diffusion of Christian knowledge and consequently for the enlargement of the kingdom of God on earth, the Rev. Leonard Goffine

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died calmly and peacefully at Cœsfield, August 11., 1719, in the seventy first year of his age.

The present translation is from the twenty ninth German edition, and it has been the aim of the translator to make it at exact as possible, and nothing has been omitted or added—Symbolism by Buchman, Missal by Nickel, Beauties of the Church by Himmioben, Version of the Holy Bible by Allioli, and Ascetic Works of St. Liguori and St. Francis of Sales, &c. May this book, therefore, in our days in which on the one hand horrible hatred against all positive Christianity unmistakably develops itself, on the other happily the faith in Jesus, the Son of God, our Mediator, and the love for His spouse, the one, holy Roman Catholic Church begin to awaken in souls, partly cold, partly lukewarm, may this book contribute to this faith and love, that they may continually increase, strengthen, and bear fruit for time and eternity.

This is the prayer and the sincere wish of the

EDITOR.

ALMANAC.

The moveable feasts, that is, those that do not come upon the same day every year, are all regulated according to Easter, and may be seen in the following table, so that when we know on which day of the month Easter comes, we can easily know all the other moveable feasts, if we only attend to the dominical letter, which is given in the second column and indicates the Sunday of the year opposite to which it stands. If in this table after the date of the years from 1870 till 1895 two letters stand beside each other, then that year is a leap-year, and the first letter shows the Sunday until the 25*th* February, the Feast of St. Matthias, from this date forward the second letter indicates the Sunday.

A. TABLE OF MOVEABLE FEASTS.

A. D.	Dominical Letter.	Golden Number.	Epacts.	Septuagesima.	Ash-Wednesday.	Easter.	Ascension.	Pentecost.	Corpus Christi.	Number of Sundays after Pentecost.	First Sunday in Advent.
1871	A	10	9	5 Febr.	22 Febr.	9 April	18 May	28 May	8 June	26	3 Dec.
1872	GF	11	20	28 Jan.	14 Febr.	31 March	9 May	19 May	30 May	27	1 Dec.
1873	E	12	1	9 Febr.	26 Febr.	13 April	22 May	1 June	12 June	25	30 Nov.
1874	D	13	12	1 Febr.	18 Febr.	5 April	14 May	24 May	4 June	26	29 Nov.
1875	C	14	23	24 Jan.	10 Febr.	28 March	6 May	16 May	27 May	27	28 Nov.
1876	BA	15	4	13 Febr.	1 March	16 April	25 May	4 June	15 June	25	3 Dec.
1877	G	16	15	28 Jan.	14 Febr.	1 April	10 May	20 May	31 May	27	2 Dec.
1878	F	17	26	17 Febr.	6 March	21 April	30 May	9 June	20 June	24	1 Dec.
1879	E	18	7	9 Febr.	26 Febr.	13 April	22 May	1 June	12 June	25	30 Nov.
1880	DC	19	18	21 Jan.	11 Febr.	28 March	6 May	16 May	27 May	27	28 Nov.
1881	B	1	*	13 Febr.	2 March	17 April	26 May	5 June	16 June	24	27 Nov.
1882	A	2	11	5 Febr.	22 Febr.	9 April	18 May	28 May	8 June	26	3 Dec.
1883	G	3	22	21 Jan.	7 Febr.	25 March	3 May	13 May	24 May	28	2 Dec.
1884	FE	4	3	10 Febr.	27 Febr.	13 April	22 May	1 June	12 June	25	30 Nov.
1885	D	5	14	1 Febr.	18 Febr.	5 April	14 May	24 May	4 June	26	29 Nov.
1886	C	6	25	21 Febr.	10 March	25 April	3 June	13 June	24 June	23	28 Nov.
1887	B	7	6	6 Febr.	23 Febr.	10 April	19 May	29 May	9 June	25	27 Nov.
1888	AG	8	17	29 Jan.	15 Febr.	1 April	10 May	20 May	31 May	27	2 Dec.
1889	F	9	28	17 Febr.	6 March	21 April	30 May	9 June	20 June	24	1 Dec.
1890	E	10	9	2 Febr.	19 Febr.	6 April	15 May	25 May	5 June	26	30 Nov.
1891	D	11	20	25 Jan.	11 Febr.	29 March	7 May	17 May	28 May	27	29 Nov.
1892	CB	12	1	14 Febr.	2 March	17 April	26 May	5 June	16 June	24	27 Nov.
1893	A	13	12	29 Jan.	15 Febr.	2 April	11 May	21 May	1 June	27	3 Dec.
1894	G	14	23	21 Jan.	7 Febr.	25 March	3 May	13 May	24 May	28	2 Dec.
1895	F	15	4	10 Febr.	27 Febr.	14 April	23 May	2 June	13 June	25	1 Dec.
1896	ED	16	15	2 Febr.	19 Febr.	5 April	14 May	24 May	4 June	26	29 Nov.
1897	C	17	26	14 Febr.	3 March	18 April	27 May	6 June	17 June	24	28 Nov.
1898	B	18	7	6 Febr.	23 Febr.	10 April	19 May	29 May	9 June	25	27 Nov.
1899	A	19	18	29 Jan.	15 Febr.	2 April	11 May	21 May	1 June	27	3 Dec.
1900	G	1	29	11 Febr.	28 Febr.	14 April	23 May	2 June	13 June	25	1 Dec.
1901	F	2	10	3 Febr.	20 Febr.	7 April	16 May	26 May	6 June	26	1 Dec.
1902	E	3	21	26 Jan.	12 Febr.	30 March	8 May	18 May	29 May	27	30 Nov.
1903	D	4	2	8 Febr.	25 Febr.	12 April	21 May	31 May	11 June	25	29 Nov.
1904	CB	5	13	31 Jan.	17 Febr.	3 April	12 May	22 May	2 June	26	27 Nov.
1905	A	6	24	19 Febr.	8 March	23 April	1 June	11 June	22 June	24	2 Dec.
1906	G	7	5	11 Febr.	28 Febr.	15 April	24 May	3 June	14 June	25	3 Dec.

B. CALENDAR OF IMMOVEABLE FEASTS.

The days printed in open print in the almanac of immoveable feasts, are Holidays. Emberdays are moveable and therefore are not given is this almanac; they are the Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, which come after the third Sunday in Advent, after the first Sunday in Lent, after Pentecost Sunday, and after the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross.

JANUARY.

1 a Circumcision of our Lord. Fulgentius, B.*)
2 b Makarius, Her.
3 c Genofieve, V.
4 d Titus, B. M.
5 e Simeon Styl, Her.; Telesphorus, P.
6 f Epiphany. (Second Sunday after Epiphany, Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus.)
7 g Lucian, Pr. M.
8 a Erhardus, B.
9 b Julian and Basilissa, MM.
10 c Paul, Her.
11 d Theodosius, Abb. Her.; Hygynus, Pr. M.
12 e Arcadius, M.
13 f Godfrey, Count.
14 g Hilary, B. C.; Felix, Pr. C.
15 a Maurus, Abb.; Paul, Her.
16 b Honoratus, B.; Paula, W.; Marcellus, P. M.
17 c Anthony, Abb. Her.
18 d Peter's Chair at Rome; Prisca, V. M.
19 e Canute, K.; Marius, Martha, MM.
20 f Fabian and Sebastian, MM.
21 g Agnes, V. M.
22 a Vincent and Anastasius, MM.
23 b John, Almon.; Espousal B. V. M.; Ildephons, B. C.; Emerentiana, V. M.
24 c Timothy, B. M.
25 d Conversion of St. Paul.
26 e Polycarp, B. M.
27 f John Chrysostom, B. C.
28 g Raymond de Penafort, C.; Julian, B. C.
29 a Francis of Sales, B.
30 b Adelgundes, V.; Martina, V. M.
31 c Peter Nolascus, C.; Ludovica, W.

FEBRUARY.

1 d Ignatius, B. M.; Bridget, V.
2 e Purification of blessed Virgin Mary.
3 f Blase, B. M.
4 g Andrew Corsini, B.
5 a Agatha, V. M.; Paulus, John, and James, MM.
6 b Dorothy, V. M.
7 c Romuald, Abb.
8 d John of Matha, Founder of Order of Trinitarians.
9 e Apollonia, V. M.
10 f Scholastica, V.
11 g Euphrosina, V.
12 a Eulalia, V. M.
13 b Gregory II., P.; Catharine of Ricci, V.
14 c Valentine, Pr. M.
15 d Faustinus and Jovita, MM.
16 e Juliana, V. M.
17 f Flavian, Arch-B. M.; Constantia, V.
18 g Simeon, B. M.
19 a Mansuetus, B.; Conrad Piac., C.
20 b Eucherius, B.

*) Explanation of abbreviations: Abb.—Abbot; Ap.—Apostle; B.—Bishop; C.—Confessor; D.—Doctor; Her.—Hermit; M.—Martyr; MM.—Martyrs: P.—Pope; PP.—Popes; Pen.—Penitent; Pr.—Priest; V.—Virgin; VV.—Virgins.

21 c Adelaide, V. Abbess.
22 d St. Peter's Chair at Antioch.; Margareth of Cortona, Pen.
23 e Romana, V.; Peter Damian, Her.
24 f Matthias, Ap.
(In a leap-year the Feast of St. Matthias is celebrated on the 25*th*, and then there are 29 days in February.)
25 g Walburge, V. Abbess.
26 a Dionysius, B.; Alexander, P.
27 b Leander, B.
28 c Romanus, Abb.

MARCH.

1 d Swidbert, B.
2 e Simplicius, P.
3 f Cunegundes, V.
4 g Casimir, King, Con.; Lucius, P.
5 a Gerasimus, Her. Abb.
6 b Fridolin, Abb.
7 c Thomas Aquinas, C. D.; Perpetua and Felicitas, MM.
8 d John of God, C.
9 e Frances, W.
10 f The forty Martyrs of Sebaste.
11 g Gumbert, B.
12 a Gregory, the Great, P.C.D.
13 b Euphrasia, V.
14 c Mathildis, Empress.
15 d Longinus, M.
16 e Heribert, Arch-B.
17 f Patrick, B. C.; Gertrude, V. Abbess.
18 g Cyrillus, B.
19 a Joseph.
20 b Joachim, C., Father of the blessed Virgin Mary.
21 c Benedict, Abb.
22 d Catherine of Sweden, V.
23 e Nicholas of the Flue, Her.
24 f Gabriel, Archangel.
25 g Annunciation of the blessed Virgin Mary.
(The Feast of the Seven Dolors is celebrated on the Friday before Palm Sunday.)
26 a Ludger, B.
27 b Rupert, B.
28 c Gontran, King.
29 d Eustasius, Abb.
30 e John Climacus.
31 f Guy, Abb. C.

APRIL.

1 g Hugh, B.
2 a Francis of Paula, Founder.
3 b Mary of Egypt, Pen.
4 c Isidore, B. C.
5 d Vincent Ferrer, C.
6 e William, Abb.
7 f Herman Joseph.
8 g Albert, B.
9 a Mary Cleophas.
10 b Mechtildis, V. Abbess.
11 c Leo, the Great, P. C.
12 d Zeno, B. M.; Julius, P.
13 e Justinus, M.; Hermenegildis, Queen, M.; Ida, V.
14 f Tiburtius, Valerianus, and Maximus, MM.
15 g William, Her.
16 a Gerauld, Duke; Turribius, B. C.
17 b Rudolph, M.; Anicerus, Pr. M.
18 c Apollonius, M.
19 d Wernerus, M.
20 e Marcellus, B.; Sulpicius and Servilianus, MM.
21 f Anselm, Arch-B. C.
22 g Soter and Cajus, PP. MM.
23 a George, M.
24 b Mellitus, M.; Fidelis of Sigmaringa, B.
25 c Mark, Evangelist.
26 d Cletus and Marcellinus, PP. MM.; Adalbert, B.
27 e Zitta, Servant, V.; Peregrinus, C.

28 f Vitalis and Valeria, MM.
29 g Peter, M.; Robert, Abb.; Antonia, V. M.
30 a Catherine of Sienna, V.

MAY.

1 b Philip and James, Ap.
2 c Athanasius, B. C.
3 d Finding of the Holy Cross; Alexander, Eventius, and Theodolus, MM.; Juvenalis, B. C.
4 e Monica, W.; Florian, M.
5 f Pius V., P. C.
6 g John Damascenus, D.
7 a Stanislaus, B. M.
8 b Apparition of St. Michael; Victor, M.
9 c Gregory Nazianzen, B. C.
10 d Anthony, B. C.; Gordian and Epimachus, MM.
11 e Mamertus, Arch-B.
12 f Nereus, Achilleus, and Pancratius, MM.; Flavia Domitilla, V.
13 g Servatius, B.
14 a Boniface, M.
15 b Dympna, V. M.
16 c John Nepomucene, M.; Ubald, B. C.
17 d Paschal Baylon, C.
18 e Vincent, M.; Felix Cantalicio, C.
19 f Peter Celestine, P. C.; Potentiana, V.
20 g Bernardine of Sienna, C.
21 a Hospitius, C.
22 b Julia, V. M.
23 c Desiderius, B.
24 d Joan converted by Christ; John Francis, King, C.
25 e Gregory VII., P. C.; Urban, P. M.
26 f Philip Neri, C.; Eleutherius, P. M.
27 g M. Magdalen of Pazzi, V.; John, P. M.
28 a Germanus, B.
29 b Theodosia, M.
30 c Felix, P. M.; Ferdinand, King.
31 d Petronilla, V.

JUNE.

1 e Pamphilus, Pr. M.
2 f Marcellinus, Peter, and Erasmus, MM.
3 g Clotildis, Queen.
4 a Optatus of Mileve, B.; Francis Caraciolo.
5 b Boniface, B. Ap. of Germany, M.
6 c Norbert, Founder.
7 d Claudius, C.
8 e Maximinius, B.
9 f Pelagia, V. M.; Primus and Felicianus, MM.
10 g Margaret, Queen; Bardo, Arch-B.
11 a Barnabas, Ap.
12 b John a Sancto Facundo, C.; Basilides, Cyrinus, Nabor, and Nazarius, MM.
13 c Anthony of Padua, C.
14 d Basil, the Great, B. C.
15 e Vitus, Modestus, and Crescentia, MM.
16 f Luitgardis, V.; Benno, B.C.
17 g Montanus, Soldier.
18 a Marcus and Marcellinus, MM.
19 b Gervase and Protase, MM.; Juliana of Falconieri, V.
20 c Florentina, V.; Silverius, P. M.
21 d Aloysius Gonzaga, C.
22 e Paulinus, B. C.; 10000 Martyrs.
23 f Ediltrudis, V.
24 g John Baptist.
25 a Febronia, V. M.; William of Monte Vergine, Abb.
26 b John and Paul, MM.
27 c Crescentius, B. M.
28 d Ireneus, B. M.; Leo, P. C.

29 e Peter and Paul, App.
30 f Martial, B.

JULY.

1 g Aaron, High Priest of Old Law.
2 a Visitation of blessed Virgin Mary; Processus and Martinianus, MM.
3 b Heliodorus, B.
4 c Ulric, B.
5 d Cyrilla, M.
6 e Goarius, Pr.
7 f Willibald, B.; Pulcheria, V. Empress.
8 g Kilian, B. M.; Elisabeth, Queen.
9 a Anatolia, V. M.; Leonard and his companions, MM.
10 b Seven Brethren, MM.; and their mother Felicitas; Rufina and Secunda, MM.
11 c Pius, B. M.
12 d John Gualbertus, Abb.; Nabor and Felix, MM.
13 e Anacletus, P. M.
14 f Bonaventure, B. C.
15 g Henry, Emperor, C.; Separation of the Apostles.
16 a B. V. Mary of Mt. Carmel; Faustus, M.
17 b Alexius, C.
18 c Symphorosa with her Seven Sons, MM.; Camillus of Lellis, C.
19 d Arsenius, Her.; Vincent of Paul, Founder.
20 e Margaret, V. M.; Jerome Aemil, C.
21 f Praxedis, V.; Victor, Soldier, M.
22 g Mary Magdalen, Pen.
23 a Apollinaris, B. M.; Liborius, B. C.
24 b Christina, V. M.
25 c James the Greater, Ap.; Christophorus, M.
26 d Anne, Mother of B. V. Mary.
27 e Pantaleon, M.
28 f Nazarius, Celsus, Victor, PP. MM.; Innocent, P. C.
29 g Martha, V.; Felix, P.; Simplicius, Faustinus and Beatrix, MM.
30 a Julitta, M.; Abdon and Sennen, MM.
31 b Ignatius, C.

AUGUST.

1 c Peter's Chair; Machabees, MM.
2 d Stephen, P. M.; Portiuncula; Theodora with her three Sons, MM.; Alphonsus Liguori, B. Founder.
3 e Finding of the Relics of St. Stephen, first Martyr.
4 f Dominic, Founder.
5 g Dedication of St. Mary ad Nives; Afra, M.; Oswald, King.
6 a Transfiguration; Xystus, P.; Felicissimus and Agapitus, MM.
7 b Cajetan, Founder; Donatus, B. M.
8 c Cyriacus, Largus and Smaragdus, MM.
9 d Romanus, M.
10 e Laurentius, Levite, M.
11 f Tiburtius and Susanna, MM.
12 g Clara, V. Foundress; Hilaria, M.
13 a Hippolytus and Cassianus, MM.
14 b Eusebius, C.; Athanasia, W.
15 c Assumption of blessed Virgin Mary.
16 d Hyacinth, C.
17 e Liberatus, Abb.
18 f Agapitus, M.; Helena, Empress.
19 g Julius, M.; Louis, B. C.
20 a Bernard, Abb.

21 b Jane Frances Fremiot of Chantal, W.
22 c Timothy, Hippolitus and Symphorianus, MM.
23 d Sidonius, Philip Benit, C.
24 e Bartholomew, Ap.
25 f Louis, King.
26 g Zephyrinus, P. M.
27 a Gebhard, B.; Joseph Calasant, C.
28 b Augustine, B. C. D.; Hermes, M.
29 c Decollation of St. John Bapt.; Sabina, M.
30 d Rose of Lima, V.; Felix and Audactus, MM.; Helena, W.
31 e Isabella, V.; Raymond Nonnatus, C.

SEPTEMBER.

1 f Giles, Her. Abb.; The twelve brethren, MM.
2 g Stephen, King of Hungary.
3 a Joachim, Father of B. V. Mary.
(Otherwise on the Sunday after the Assumption of the B. V.)
4 b Rosalia, V.
5 c Lawrence Justinian, B. C.
6 d Magnus, Abb.
7 e Regina, V. M.
8 f Nativity of B. V. M.; Adrian, M.
(Sunday afterwards Feast of Holy Name of B. V. M.)
9 g Gorgonius, M.
10 a Nicholas of Tolentin, C.
11 b Protus and Hyacinth, MM.
12 c Sacerdos, B.
13 d Amatus, Abb.
14 e Exaltation of the holy Cross.
15 f Nicomedes, M.
16 g Cornelius P. and Cyprian, B., MM.
17 a Holy Stigmas of St. Francis; Lambert, B. M.
18 b Joseph a Cupertino, C.; Thomas of Villa nova, B. C.
19 c Januarius, B. M.
20 d Eustochis, &c. MM.
21 e Matthew, Ap. Evangelist.
22 f Mauritius, &c. MM.
23 g Linus, P. M.; Thecla, V. M.
24 a Mary de Mercede; Gerardus, B. M.
25 b Cleophas, M. Disc. Ch.
26 c Cyprian and Justina, MM.
27 d Cosmas and Damian, Brethren and MM.
28 e Wenceslaus, Duke, M.
29 f Michael, Archangel.
30 g Jerome, Pr. D.

OCTOBER.

1 a Remigius, B. C.
2 b Leodegarius, B. M.; Otto, B.
3 c Candidus, B.
4 d Francis Seraph, Founder.
5 e Placidus, Abb.; Flavia, V. M.
6 f Bruno, Founder.
7 g Mark, P. C.; Sergius, Bacchus, &c. MM.
8 a Bridget, W.
9 b Dionysius, B.; Rusticus, Pr. and Eleutherius, Deacon, MM.
10 c Francis Borgia, C.; Louis Bertrand, C.; Gereon, &c. MM.
11 d Placida, V.
12 e Domnina, M.
13 f Edward, C.; Sympertus, B. C.
14 g Callistus, P. M.; Burchardus, B.
15 a Theresia, V.
16 b Gaul, Abb.
17 c Hedwiges, Duchess, W.
18 d Luke, Evangelist.
19 e Peter of Alcantara.

20 f Wendelin, Abb.; John Cant., C.
21 g Hilarion, Abb.; Ursula, &c. VV. MM.
22 a Cordula, V. M.
23 b Severin, B.; Peter Paschal, B. M.
24 c Raphael, Archangel.
25 d Chrysanthus and Daria, MM.; Gavinus, Protus, and Januarius, MM.
26 e Evaristus, P. M.
27 f Florentinus, M.
28 g Simon and Judas, App.; Anastasia, V. M.
29 a Narcissus, B.; Eusebia, V. M.
30 b Marcellus, Centur. M.
31 c Wolfgang, B.

NOVEMBER.

1 d All Saints.
2 e All Souls.
3 f Malachias, B.
4 g Charles Borr., Arch-B.; Vitalis and Agricola, MM.
5 a Emmericius.
6 b Leonard, Her. Pr.
7 c Willibrordus, B.
8 d Four Crowned Brethren, MM.; Godfrey, B.
9 e Theodorus, Soldier, M.
10 f Andrew Avell., C.; Tryphon and Respicius, MM.; Nympha, V.
11 g Martinus, B. C.; Mennas, M.
12 a Martinus, P. M.
13 b Didacus, C.; Stanislaus Costka, C.
14 c Veneranda, V. M.
15 d Gertrude, V.; Leopold, Margrave.
16 e Othmar, Abb.; Edmund, Arch-B.
17 f Gregory Thaumatur., B. C.
18 g Odo, Abb. of Clugny; Maximus, B. of Mayence.
19 a Elisabeth, W.; Pontianus, P. M.
20 b Felix de Valois, C.
21 c Presentation of B. V. M.; Albertus, B. M.
22 d Cecilia, V. M.
23 e Clement, P. M.; Felicitas, M.
24 f John of the Cross, C.; Chrysogony, M.; Columban, Abb.
25 g Catharine, V. M.
26 a Peter, Alexander, B. M.; Conrad, B.
27 b Virgilius, B.
28 c Sosthenes, Disciple of St. Paul.
29 d Saturninus, B.
30 e Andrew, Ap.

DECEMBER.

1 f Eligius, B.
2 g Bibiana, V. M.
3 a Francis Xavier, Ap. of India, C.; Lucius, B. C.
4 b Barbara, V. M.; Peter Chrysologus, B. C.
5 c Sabba, Abb.
6 d Nicholas, B. C.
7 e Ambrose, B.
8 f Immaculate Conception of B. V. M.; Eucherius, B.; Sophronius, B.
9 g Gorgonia, Leocadia, V. M.
10 a Melchiades, P.
11 b Damascus, P.
12 c Dionysia, &c. MM.
13 d Lucia, V. M.; Ottilia, V.
14 e Nicasius, B.
15 f Valerianus, B. M.
16 g Eusebius, B. M.
17 a Adelaide, W.; Florian, &c. MM.; Lazarus, B.
18 b Expectation of the B. V. M.; Gratian, B.
19 c Timothy and Maura, MM.
20 d Philogonius, B.
21 e Thomas, Ap.

22 f Ischyrion, M.
23 g Victoria, V. M.; Servulus, Beggar.
24 a Adam and Eve.
25 b Nativity of our Lord; Anastasia, M.; Eugenia, V. M.
26 c Stephen, first Martyr.
27 d John, Ap. Evangelist.
28 e Innocents; Doma, Agape, Theophila, &c. VV. MM.
29 f Thomas of Canterbury, B. M.
30 g Sabinus, B. M.
31 a Sylvester, B. C.

GOFFINE'S

ECCLESIASTICAL YEAR.

PART I.

EXPLANATION

OF THE

EPISTLES AND GOSPELS

FOR THE

SUNDAYS AND FESTIVALS,

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

INSTRUCTIONS ON CHRISTIAN FAITH AND MORALS.

SHORT INSTRUCTION

ON THE

MANNER OF USING THIS BOOK.

Before you, my dear Christian, commence to read these instructions,

I. Place yourself in the presence of God, as much as if you were really sitting with Mary Magdalen at His feet, listening to His words.

II. Humble yourself, as a weak sinner, before Him, sincerely imploring His forgiveness.

III. Pray that you may be enlightened and may love Him; recommend yourself to the blessed Virgin and to the saints.

Then, step by step, read the instructions carefully. After each point pause a moment and reflect upon the truth which you have read, asking yourself: 1) What must I believe? That which I have just read. Then make an act of faith, saying: "O Lord! I will believe this truth, help my faith, increase my faith!" 2) What have I now to do? I must correct the faults opposed to this truth. 3) What have I done heretofore? Unhappily, O God, I have acted in contradiction to this truth; how differently, O Jesus, from Thee and from Thy saints! 4) What shall I now do? Here make a firm resolution to put these truths into immediate practice, to contend against and overcome the faults opposed to them, and to acquire a new virtue.

Then finish the reading with acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition. Do this each time you read in this or in any book of devotion, and you will soon see, how great a benefit you will derive from it for your soul.

EXPLANATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS
CONCERNING THE ECCLESIASTICAL YEAR.

What is understood by the Ecclesiastical Year?

BY the Ecclesiastical Year is understood the succession of those holy days and seasons, returning with each returning year, which the Church has appointed to be celebrated that the faithful may be reminded of the divine graces and mysteries, may praise God, and occupy themselves, at such times, with pious devotional exercises in His honor, and for their own sanctification and edification.

When does the Ecclesiastical Year begin, and when does it end?

It begins with the first Sunday in Advent and ends with the last Sunday after Pentecost.

How is the Ecclesiastical Year divided?

Into Sundays, weekdays, festivals, holidays and fastdays.

What is Sunday?

Sunday is the first day of the week, sanctified in an especial manner by God Himself, called by the Apostles the "Lord's Day", which should be devoted exclusively to the service of God.

Why should the Sunday be devoted exclusively to God?

Because it is but proper that man, who is created for the service of God only, should reserve at least one out of the seven days of the week for that service, and for the salvation of his own soul. So, in the beginning, God ordered that on the seventh day or Saturday, on which He rested after finishing the work of creation, man also should rest, (*Exodus* xx, 11.) abstain from all worldly employment, and attend only to the worship of God. This was the Sabbath, or day of rest, of the Jews which they were required to keep holy. (*Lev.* xxiii. 24)

But the Catholic Church, authorized by Christ, inspired by the Holy Ghost, and directed by the Apostles, has made the first day of the week, or Sunday, of which the holy martyr Justin, even, speaks (*† 167 A. D.*), the day of rest for the Christians, partly to distinguish them from the Jews, and partly for these reasons: On this day God commenced the creation of the world and on this very day He completed its renovation by Christ's glorious resurrection; on this day, as Bellarmine says, Christ was born, was

circumcized, and was baptized; and on this day the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles.

Why is this day called Sunday?

Because on this day, as St. Ambrose says, Christ, the sun of justice, having scattered the darkness of hell, shone forth, as the rising sun, in the glory of the resurrection. (*Malach.* iv. 2.)

How should the Catholic keep Sunday holy, and how does he desecrate it?

Sunday is kept holy by abstaining from all servile work, performed for wages or gain, or not commanded by necessity; by passing the day in works of piety; in hearing Mass devoutly, listening to the word of God in church and at home in a quiet, God pleasing manner. If justly prevented from being present at church on Sundays and holidays of obligation, we should unite, in spirit, with the priest and the faithful assembled there, praying fervently; during the rest of the day we should read books of devotion and endeavor to perform some work of charity. Sunday is desecrated by being spent either in idleness or in unnecessary servile work, or in that which is still worse, debauchery, gambling, dancing or in other sinful deeds. It would be better, that is, less bad, as St. Augustine says, to till the field on such days, than to spend them in frivolous, dangerous, and sinful pleasures. But it is not forbidden, having properly attended divine service, to participate on Sundays and holidays in honorable, decorous entertainment of the mind and heart.

What, as a Catholic, is thought of dancing on Sundays and holidays of obligation?

The amusement of dancing on these holy days cannot possibly be pleasing to God. Dancing, as its manner is now, is generally the grave of innocence. Dances are a festival of the devil, says St. Ephrem; they are the coffin of innocence and the grave of modesty; they are nothing less than a circle of which the devil is the centre, and, they are, therefore, seldom or never indulged in without sin, says St. Charles Borromeo. How, then, can an honest girl and an honest young man meet in a ball-room and conjointly celebrate the devil's feast? How, then, can parents permit their children, masters and mistresses their servants, to go where their innocence is in such danger? Fairs are just as little pleasing to God. God never ordained His days for buying and selling, for the gratification of avarice and the greed of gain. But alas! these fairs are made use of not only for traffic, but often by young people for forbidden meetings. On the way to them and back innocence is often buried. St. Jerome justly calls such gatherings the deathstruggle of innocence and purity.

What rewards are offered for keeping Sunday sacred, and what punishment incurred by its desecration?

The Old Law (*Lev.* xxvi.) promised all fortune, well-being, and all blessing to those who kept holy the Sabbath day; and all evils and misfortunes to those who desecrated it. Thus, to show how much He condemned its profanation, God caused a man to be stoned to death for gathering wood upon that day. (*Num.* xv. 32.) The Catholic Church from her very beginning, and in several councils (*Coun. Elv. A. D. 313, Paris 829.*) has enjoined the keeping holy of Sundays and holidays, and experience proves in our days especially, that, as the consequence of the constantly increasing profanation of Sundays and holidays, that immorality and poverty are growing greater; a manifest sign that God never blesses those who refuse to devote a few days of the year to His honor and service.

PRAYER FOR ALL SUNDAYS. O God, who hast appointed this day, that during it we may serve Thee and participate in Thy grace, grant that always on Sundays our faith may be renewed and our hearts incited to Thy praise and to the adoration of Thy Majesty; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

What are festivals?

Festivals are days set apart by the Catholic Church, and observed with certain solemnities, in order to place the mysteries and graces of God, or the memory of the Saints, before the eyes of the faithful, that they may be incited to gratitude to God, and to the veneration and imitation of the Saints. Thus there are festivals of God, of Christ and of the Saints.

Has the Church the right to institute festivals and fast-days?

To deny her such right would be to place her below the Jewish Synagogue, which in acknowledgment of benefits received, established many festivals, such as the Purim Feast (*Esther* ix. 26.), the festival in honor of Judith's victory over Holofernes (*Judith.* xvi, 31.), the feast of the Dedication of the Temple (*Maab.* iv, 52.; *John* x. 22.), which our Lord himself celebrated with them. Should not the Catholic Church therefore celebrate with equal solemnity the far greater blessings she has received from God? God Himself through Moses commanded the Jews to celebrate, and as it were, to immortalize, by the Pasch, their redemption from Egyptian captivity; the reception of the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai, by the festival of Pentecost, their forty years journey through the wilderness and their living in huts by the feast of the Tabernacles. How unjustly, then, would the Church conduct herself, if she should not commemorate, as the Old Law did, by the institution of certain festivals in honor of God and His Saints,

those graces of which He has made her partaker, through Christ and His Saints, since our Lord gave to the Apostles and to the bishops, their successors, the power to bind and to loose, that is, to make ordinances, and, as circumstances may require, changes (*Matt.* xviii. 18.), for the salvation of the people! Among these ordinances are festivals and holidays, instituted to assist the faithful in procuring their salvation. And from this very right of the Church to institute festivals follows her right to change or abolish them, at her option, whenever her object of directing them to the honor of God is no longer reached, and the faithful in this case would be as much bound to obey her, as when she established them, for: Who hears not the Church, says Christ, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican. (*Matt.* xviii. 17.)

How are holidays and festivals to be observed?

They are to be observed like Sunday. Besides which we should endeavor to understand well the mysteries and blessings of God, the lives and labors of the Saints, on whose account the festivals have been established, which we can do by hearing Mass and catechetical instruction, or at home by reading books written on devotional subjects, in order to induce ourselves to love and praise God and to imitate the Saints, for these are the objects the Church has in view in establishing festivals. But, unfortunately, as these objects of theChurch are responded to by but few, and as, on the contrary, partly on account of their number, partly on account of the increasing laxity of the faithful, the holidays are spent very differently from the way the Church intended, she has done well in abolishing certain festivals, or transferring them to Sunday, that they may be, at least, better regarded, and God not offended by their profanation. However, on these days, which have been changed or done away with, there is no prohibition to hear Mass devoutly, but idleness and ill behavior are especially sinful on these days.

What are fastdays?

Fastdays are those days on which the Church commands us to mortify the body and offer God a sacrifice of mortification by abstaining from fleshmeat, or by taking but one full meal in the day. Those days on which besides the abstinence from meat, but one full meal is allowed, are called Fastdays of obligation; those days on which it is only required to abstain from meat, are called days of abstinence.

Can the Church institute fastdays?

She can, because the Church of Christ, as mother of the faithful, has the power to make all useful and necessary regulations for the salvation of their souls. In doing so she only follows the example of our Lord, her head, for He fasted, and of the Apostles

who, even in their day, ordered Christians to abstain from blood and things strangled (*Acts* xv. 28.), in order not to prevent the conversion of the Jews, who, on account of the Old Law, abhorred the blood and meat of strangled animals, but removed the prohibition when there was no longer danger of hindering the Jews. "Fasting is no new invention", writes the father of the Church Basil the Great *(† 379 A. D.),* "as many imagine, it is a precious treasure, which our forefathers preserved long before our days, and have handed down to us".

Why has the Church instituted fastdays and what is their use?

The Catholic Church, from the very beginning, has looked upon external fasting, only as an accompaniment and outward sign of penance. Her object in instituting fastdays, therefore, was and is, that by fasting the faithful may mortify their flesh and their evil desires, seek to pacify God, make satisfaction for their sins, practice obedience to the Church their mother, and by performing these virtues become more zealous and fervent in prayer, and in the service of God. Because fasting aids in all this, as is proved by innumerable texts of Scripture, as well as by experience. The fathers are full of praise of the usefulness of fasting, and our Lord predicted that the Church, His spouse, would fast when He, her bridegroom, should be taken from her. (*Matt.* ix. 15.)

What are we to think of those heretics and of those Catholics who contemn the Church's command to fast?

Those Catholics who contemn the Church's command to fast, and who therefore transgress it fearlessly, contemn their mother, the Church, and Christ her founder and her head, who fasted: give scandal to others, obedient children of the Church, and do themselves great harm, because they make themselves slaves of the flesh, subject their souls to the evil desires of the body and so fall into many sins. They show that they have departed from the spirit of the early Christians who fasted with great strictness, and that they are too cowardly to overcome themselves, and offer God the sacrifice of obedience to His Church. The heretics have the Bible against them if they assert that the Church's command to fast is useless and unnecessary: (*Acts.* xiii. 2, 3.) that Bible on which they so often call, as well as all Christian antiquity, experience and reason. One of the fathers of the Church Basil writes: "Honor ever the ancient practice of fasting, for it is as old as the first human creation. We must fast if we would return to paradise from which gluttony expelled us". Every rational reflecting person must acknowledge, as experience teaches, that bodily health, and unimpaired soul-power are best preserved and improved by temperance and abstinence, especially from flesh-meat. By continual fasting it was that many of the old fathers

of the desert preserved vigorous health, lasting beyond the usual limit of man's age, even lived more than a century in the hot countries where the time of life is generally shorter than in our climate. St. Paul, the first hermit, lived one hundred and thirteen years; St. Anthony one hundred and five; St. Arsenius one hundred and twenty; St. John, the silent, one hundred and four; St. Theodosius abbot, one hundred and five. The Catholic Church here proves herself a good mother to us, for in this command she regards not only the spiritual but the corporal welfare of her children. The words of our Lord: "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but that which cometh out of the mouth this defileth a man", was meant for the Pharisees who judged certain kinds of food prohibited by law, or that had been touched by unclean hands, to be unclean. Had He intended it to be understood in the way the contemners of fasting assert, He would have declared intoxication by drinking, even the taking of poison, to be permitted; certainly food being the gift of God and therefore good, does not make man a sinner, but disobedience to the command and inordinate greediness and gluttony make him such.

Which are the most important fastdays?

First, the Great or Forty Days fast (*Lent*), which will be spoken of in its proper place; secondly, the Ember-fasts; thirdly, the Vigils; fourthly, Fridays and Saturdays throughout the year, as also the Sundays in Lent, which, however, are only days of abstinence.

By special dispensation the command to abstain from meat on the Sundays of Lent, to fast and abstain on all Saturdays, and to fast on all Fridays throughout the year has been removed. All Fridays throughout the year are days of abstinence, all Fridays in Advent, and all Fridays and Saturdays in Lent are days of fasting and abstinence. The Saturdays in Advent are days of abstinence but not fastdays of obligation.

What are the Ember-days and why are they instituted?

The Ember-days are the first Wednesday, Friday and Saturday at the commencement of each of the four seasons of the year, set apart as fastdays by the Catholic Church. According to the testimony of Pope Leo their origin was in the times of the Apostles, who were inspired by the Holy Ghost to dedicate each season of the year to God by a few days of penance, and, as it were, to pay three days interest every three months, on the graces received from God. The Church has also commanded us to fast at the beginning of each of the four seasons of the year, because it is at this time that she ordains the priests and other servants of the Church, which even the Apostles did with much prayer and fasting. Thus she desires that during the Ember-days the Christians should fervently ask of God by prayer, fasting and other good works,

that He would give her worthy pastors and servants, on whom depend the welfare of the whole Christian flock; she desires that in the spring Ember-days whe should ask for God's blessing for the fertility of the earth; in summer for the preservation of the fruits of the field, in the fall when the harvest is ripe, and in the winter when it is brought in, that we should offer to God by fasting and prayer a sacrifice of thanks petitioning Him to assist us, that we may not use His gifts for our soul's detriment, but that we may give praise and thanks to Him, the fountain of all good, and assist our neighbor according to our means.

What are Vigil-fasts?

They are the eves of certain festivals, which the Church has ordered to be observed as fastdays. Even the early Christians prepared themselves by fasting, praying and watching, as signified by the latin word "Vigil", for the coming festival. Thus to this day in the Vigil-Mass the priest does not say "Ite Missa est" *(Go ye, Mass is over)*, but "Benedicamus Domino" *(Let us praise the Lord)*, because in olden times when Mass was celebrated at night, the Christians were invited to continue praising God in Church until the dawn of the festival; but this nightwatch the Church has now abolished, partly on account of the decaying zeal of the Christians, and partly on account of the abuse of it to be feared, but has retained the fast, by which to honor God and his Saints, to obtain their intercession mortifying the flesh according to their example. "By fasting on the eves of festivals", says St. Bernard, "we learn that we can enter heaven only through many sufferings".

Why does the Church forbid the use of fleshmeat on Fridays and Saturdays?

"The Church", as Pope Innocence says, "forbids the use of fleshmeat on Fridays because our Lord died on that day, and on Saturday because on it He rested in the sepulchre, and also that we may be better prepared by this abstinence for Sunday". In some dioceses the use of meat is allowed on Saturdays, and so marked in the calender and every year announced to the people, and for this dispensation the faithful should fast all the more conscientiously on Fridays.

Who is bound to fast and who not?

All Christians over seven years of age, unless for some reason excused, are required under pain of mortal sin, to abstain from meat on all days of fasting and abstinence; all those who are over twenty one years of age are bound to take but one full meal a day. A severe illness or a dispensation obtained by valid reasons, and not by fraud or extorted by vain pretences, excuse from the necessity of abstinence on Fridays: those are dispensed from the necessity of fasting on one meal on fastdays, who cannot fulfill the

command without great inconvenience such as: those recovering from sickness, pregnant and nursing women, old and infirm people, those who are engaged in hard labor, undertaking severe journeys and the poor who have no full meals: also those who are prevented by the fast from some better work incumbent upon their office or dictated by Christian charity. These persons mentioned are excused from fasting in so far that they are permitted to eat whenever they need food, but must still abstain from the use of meat unless also dispensed from the command of abstinence. They should however be sincerely grieved to be unable to unite with the whole Church in such meritorious work, and should endeavor to make amends by prayer, alms-deeds, and other good works.

Who sin against fasting?

First, those who deliberately and without sufficient cause do not abstain from the use of meat; secondly, those who without any of the excuses mentioned take more than one full meal in the day; thirdly, those who eat between the time of meals, although to drink, or a simple taste of food does not break the fast; fourthly, those who indulge in long extravagant, and temptingly prepared dinners, abundant drinking and excessive amusement which are all opposed to the spirit of penance and mortification. And lastly, when on a fastday fleshmeat and fish are used at the same meal.

Is it not allowable to eat any thing in the evening on fastdays?

The early Christians were so rigorous in their penance that they contented themselves with one temperate meal on fastdays, and that was generally by bread and water and taken only in the evening; but as, in the course of time. the penitential zeal declined, the Church like an indulgent mother permitted, besides the full meal at noon, a small quantity of food to be taken in the evening, that is about as much as would make the fourth part of a regular meal, or not to appear scrupulous, as much as would not cause too great aggravation, or exhaust the strength necessary for the next day's labor; but "to wish to feel no aggravation in fasting, is to wish not to fast at all".

With what intentions should we fast?

First, with the intention of doing penance and punishing the body for the sins which we have committed by yielding to its evil desires; secondly, to satisfy God and to unite ourselves with our Lord in his forty days fast; thirdly, to obtain the strength to lead a chaste. pure life; fourthly, to give to the poor that which is saved by fasting.

NOTE. Whatever is necessary to be understood further in regard to this subject, will be found in the instructions on the forty days fast.

INSTRUCTIONS IN REGARD TO THE ADVENT AND THE TIME OF ADVENT.

What is the meaning of the word Advent, and what do we understand by it?

THE word Advent signifies Coming, and by it is understood the visible coming of the Son of God, at two different times, to this world.

When was the first coming of Christ?

It was when the Son of God, conceived by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the most pure Virgin Mary, was born, according to the flesh, in the fulness of time, and sanctified the world by His coming for which the patriarchs and prophets had so longed. (*Gen.* xlix, 10., *Isai.* lxiv. 1., *Luke* x, 24.)

Since Christ had not yet come how were the just of the Old Law saved?

Immediately after their sin God revealed to our first parents (*Gen.* iii. 15.) that His only begotten Son would become man and redeem the world. In the hope of this Redeemer and through His future merits all in the old covenant who participated in His merits by innocence or by penance, and who died in the grace of God, were saved, although they were excluded from heaven until the ascension of Christ.

When will the second coming of Christ take place?

At the end of the world when Christ will come with great power and majesty to judge both the living and the dead.

What is Advent, and why has the Church instituted it?

Advent is that solemn time, immediately preceding Christmas, instituted by the Church in order that we should in the first place meditate on the Incarnation of Christ, the love, patience and humility which He has shown us, and to prove our gratitude to Him that He came from the bosom of His heavenly Father into this valley of tears, to redeem us; secondly, that we may prepare ourselves by sincere repentance, by fasting, prayer, alms-deeds, and other works pleasing to God, for the coming of Christ and His birth in our hearts, and thus participate in the graces which He has obtained for us; finally, that He may be merciful to us when He shall come again as judge of the world. "Watch ye and pray, for ye know not at what hour the Son of Man may come". (*Matt.* xxiv. 42. 44.)

How was Advent formerly observed?

Very differently from now. It then commenced with the feast of St. Martin, and was observed by the faithful like the Forty Days

Fast with strict fasting and pious devotional exercises; as even now the most religious communities fast, and the Church has forbidden all noisy amusements, weddings, dancing and concerts among Christians during Advent. Pope Sylverius ordered that those who seldom receive Holy Communion should at least do so on every Sunday in Advent.

How should this solemn time be spent by pious Christians?

They should recall, during these four weeks, the four thousand years in which the just under the Old Law expected and desired the promised Redeemer, think of those days of darkness in which nearly all the nations were blinded by Satan and drawn into the most horrible crimes, then to consider their own sins and evil deeds and purify their souls from them by a worthy reception of the Sacraments, so that our Lord may come with His grace to dwell in their hearts and be merciful to them in life and in death. Further to awaken in the faithful the feelings of repentance so necessary for the reception of the Saviour in their hearts, the Church orders that besides the observance of certain fastdays, the altar shall be draped in violet, that Mass shall be celebrated in violet vestments, that the organ shall be silent and no Gloria sung. Unjust to themselves, disobedient to the Church, and ungrateful, indeed, to God are those Christians and Catholics who spend this solemn time of grace presented to them, without any special devotions, without performing any good works, with no longing for the coming of Christ into their hearts, without receiving the sacraments, perhaps in foolish, even sometimes in sinful amusements.

What are Rorate, High-Masses, and why are they celebrated?

They are the solemn Highmasses celebrated in some countries in commemoration of the tidings brought to the Blessed Virgin by the Archangel Gabriel, announcing to her that she was to become the Mother of God, and derive their name from the words of the Introit in the Votive-Mass in honor of our beloved Lady "Rorate cœli desuper"; and are also sometimes called the Angel's High-Mass. They are celebrated very early in the morning because the Blessed Virgin preceded our Lord, as the aurora the rising sun.

PRAYER IN ADVENT. O God, who by Thy gracious advent hast brought joy into this world, grant us, we beseech Thee, Thy grace to prepare ourselves by sincere penance for its celebration and for the Last Judgment. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

THE first Sunday in Advent is the first day of the Ecclesiastical Year, and the beginning of the holy season of Advent. The Church commences, on this day, to contemplate the great longing with which the just of the Old Law desired the coming of the Redeemer; on these days and during the entire season of Advent she unites her prayers with their sighs in order to awaken in her children also the desire for the grace of the Redeemer; above all to move them to do true penance for their sins, because these are the greatest obstacles in the path of that gracious Advent; therefore she sings at the Introit of the day's Mass: "To Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul. In Thee, O my God, I put my trust; let me not be ashamed. Neither let my enemies laugh at me: for none of them that wait on Thee shall be confounded. Show, O Lord, Thy ways to me and teach me Thy paths". (*Psalm* xxiv. 1—4.) Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Show forth Thy power, O Lord, and come that we may merit to be delivered by Thy protection from the imminent danger of our sins, and be saved by Thee, our Liberator. Who livest and reignest with God the Father together with the Holy Ghost, God for ever and ever. Amen.

EPISTLE. (*Romans* xiii. 11—14.) BRETHREN! you know the time, that it is now the hour for us to rise from sleep. For now our salvation is nearer than when we believed. The night is passed and the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in eating and drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and envy: but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.

What does St. Paul teach us in this epistle?

After fully explaining the duties of a Christian life to the Romans who were converted especially by St. Peter, he exhorts them to hesitate no longer to fulfill them, and seeks to move their hearts in this time of grace, presented to them by the Christian regulation.

What is meant here by sleep?

The stupidity and blindness of the soul that, forgetting her God, is sunk in a luckwarm, effeminate, slothful and lustful life, which when it is gone, leaves behind nothing more than a dream had in sleep.

Why does St. Paul say, "salvation is nearer"?

He wishes to impress upon the Romans that they now have far greater hope of salvation than when they first became Christians, and that they should secure it by a pious life, because death, and the moment on which depended their salvation, or eternal reward, was drawing near. "What is our life", says St. Chrysostom, "other than a course, a dangerous course to death, through death to immortality"?

What is the signification of day and night?

The night signifies the time before Christ, full of darkness, of infidelity and of injustice; the day represents the present time, the time of grace and of the gospel light in the Church, in which Christ enlightens the whole world with the light of the true faith.

What are "the works of darkness?"

All sins, and especially those which are committed in the dark, and shun the eye of God and man.

What is the "armor of light?"

That faith, virtue and grace, the spiritual armor, with which we battle against our three enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil, and in which we should walk honestly before all men. A Christian who in baptism has renounced the devil and all his pomps, dares not live in vice and impurities, but must put on Christ Jesus, that is, must adorn his soul with the imitation of Christ's virtues, as with a beautiful garment. This text *(verse 13)* moved St. Augustine to fly from all works of uncleanliness in which he has been involved, and to lead a pure life which he had before thought is difficult to do.

ASPIRATION. Grant, O Lord, that we may rise by penance from the sleep of our sins, may walk in the light of Thy grace by the performance of good works, may put on Thee, and adorn our souls with the imitation of Thy virtues. Amen.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xxi. 25—33.) And there shall be signs in the sun and in the moon, and in the stars: and upon the earth distress of nations, by reason of the confusion of the roaring of the sea, and of the waves. Men withering away for fear, and expectation of what shall come upon the whole world. For the powers of heavens shall be moved:

and then they shall see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with great power and majesty. But when these things begin to come to pass, look up and lift up your heads: because your redemption is at hand. And He spoke to them a similitude. See the fig-tree and all the trees: when they now shoot forth their fruit, you know that summer is nigh. So you also, when you shall see these things come to pass, know that the kingdom of God is at hand. Amen, I say to you, this generation shall not pass away, till all things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

Why does the Church command the Gospel of the Last Judgment to be read to day?

To move us to penance, and force us to prepare our souls for the coming of Christ by placing the terrible coming in the Last Judgment before our minds. For nothing can, and nothing should more deter us from sin and urge us on to virtue than the thought that in this judgment all good and all evil will be made public, and be either rewarded or punished in the presence of the whole world.

What signs will precede the Last Judgment?

The sun will be obscured, the stars will lose their light and disappear in the firmament (*Isai.* xiii. 10.), and in their place fiery objects will be seen in the heavens and will fall upon the earth; lightning and flames will surround the earth and wither up every thing; the powers of heaven will be shaken, the elements be dissolved and brought to confusion; the waters of the earth will rise up and break in upon the land, and their roaring joined with the howling of the winds, and the beating of the storms, will fill man with terror and dread. Such evils and distress will come upon the world that men will wither away from fear not knowing whither to turn. Even the choirs of angels and the heavenly dominations will be terrified, until at last the sign of the Son of Man, the sign of the cross, will appear in the heavens, the terror of the sinners who have scorned it, the consolation of the just who have loved it. (*Matt.* xxiv. 30.)

Why will all this come to pass?

Because the people have loved the creatures of God inordinately, more than the Creator, and used them only to His dishonor, He will destroy them in this terrible manner, arming all creatures for the vengeance of His enemies (*Wisdom* v. 8.), and showing by the manner of their destruction the evils which will fall upon all sinners. The darkness of the sun will indicate the darkness of hell, the bloodred moon the anger and wrath of God; the disappearance and falling of the stars the fall of sinners into the abysses of hell and their disappearance from earth; and the madness of the elements the rage of the beast of hell (*Ludw. d. P.*). Sinners will then vainly and too late repent that they have attached their hearts to things which will end so horribly and that only increase their torments.

Why through all this does Christ command: "Lift up your heads for your redemption is at hand"?

These words are spoken to the just who as long as they live on earth are like prisoners and exiles, but at the Last Judgment will be taken body and soul into their long desired fatherland, the kingdom of heaven: into the freedom of the children of God.

These will have reason to raise their heads, now bowed in mourning and to rejoice.

How will the Last Judgment commence?

By the command of God the angels will sound the trumpets summoning men from all the four parts of the earth to come to judgment (*Thess.* iv. 15.). Then the bodies of the dead, of the just and of the unjust, will unite with their souls, be brought to the valley of Jehosophat, and there placed, the just on the right, the unjust on the left (*Matt.* xxv. 33.). Then will appear the angels and also the devils, then Christ Himself will be seen coming in a cloud in such power and majesty, that the sinners will be filled with terror, will not dare to look at Him, and will cry to the mountains to fall upon them and to the hills to cover them up. (*Luke* xxiii. 30.)

How will the judgment be held?

The books of conscience closed with this life, upon which all men are to be judged, will be opened; all good and evil thoughts, words, deeds and motives, even the most secret known only to God, will then be as plainly revealed to the whole world as if they were written on each one's forehead; and by these each one will be judged, eternally rewarded or eternally punished.

O God! If we must then give an account of every idle word (*Matt.* xii. 36), how can we stand in the face of so many sinful words and actions!

Why will God hold an universal public judgment?

Although immediately after death a special, private judgment of each soul takes place, God has ordained a public and universal judgment for the following reasons: First, that it may be shown clearly to all how just has been His private judgment, and also that the body which has been the instrument of sin or of virtue, may share in the soul's punishment or reward; secondly, that the justice they could by no means obtain in this life, may be given before the whole world to the oppressed poor, and to persecuted innocence; and that the wicked who have abused the righteous, and yet have been considered honest and good, may be shamed before all. Thirdly, that the graces and means of salvation bestowed upon each may be made known; fourthly, that the blessed providence of God which often permitted the righteous to suffer evil while the wicked prospered, may be vindicated, and it be shown, on that day, that His acts are acts of the greatest wisdom. Fifthly, that the wicked may learn the goodness of God, not for their comfort or benefit, but their greatest sorrow, that they may see how He rewards even the slightest work performed for His love and honor. Finally, that Christ may be exalted before the wicked on earth, as before the good in heaven, and that His word's truth may be solemnly made manifest.

ASPIRATION. Just art Thou, O God, and just are Thy judgments. Ah, penetrate my soul with holy fear of them, that I may be kept always in awe of them, and saved from evil conduct. Would that I could say with the penitent St. Jerome: "Whether I eat or drink, and whatever I do, I seem to hear the awful sound of the trumpet in my ears: Arise ye dead, and come to judgment".

INSTRUCTION FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

ON this day the Church not only makes mention in the office of the priest, but also in the Mass, of the two different advents of Christ, that by His gracious first advent we may be gladdened, and by His terrible last advent at the Judgment Day, we may be impressed with salutary fear. With this intention she sings at the Introit: "People of Sion, behold, the Lord shall come to save the nations, and the Lord shall make the voice of His glory heard in the joy of your heart. (*Isai.* xxx. 30.) Give ear, O Thou, that rulest Israel, Thou, that leadest Joseph like a sheep. (*Ps.* lxxix. 2.) Glory be to the Father &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to prepare the way of Thy only begotten Son, that by His advent we may be made worthy to serve Thee with purified mind and spirit; who livest and reignest with God the Father, in union with the Holy Ghost, God for ever and ever. Amen.

EPISTLE. (*Romans* xv. 4—13.) BRETHREN! For what things soever were written, were written for our learning: that through patience and the comfort of the scriptures, we might have hope. Now the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of one mind one towards another, according to Jesus Christ: that with one mind and with one mouth, you may glorify God, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive one another; as Christ also hath received you unto the honor of God. For I say that Jesus Christ was minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promise made unto the fathers. But that the gentiles are

to glorify God for his mercy, as it is written: Therefore will I confess to Thee, O Lord, among the gentiles, and will sing to Thy name. And again he saith: Rejoice, ye gentiles, with His people. And again: Praise the Lord, all ye gentiles, and magnify Him, all ye people. And again Isaias saith: There shall be a root of Jesse; and He that riseth up to rule the gentiles, in Him the gentiles shall hope. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing: that you may abound in hope and in the power of the Holy Ghost.

What does St. Paul teach in this Epistle?

The Jews and Gentiles converted to the Christian faith were disputing among themselves at Rome, in regard to abstinence and the use of certain kinds of food, reproaching each other severely; the Jews boasting over the Gentiles that the Saviour, according to promise, was born of their nation, thus claiming him from the Gentiles, who, in their turn, reproached the Jews for the hateful ingratitude with which they had crucified Him. To restore harmony St. Paul shows that each had reason, the Jews and Gentiles alike, to praise God, to whose grace and goodness they owed all, that each had in Him a Redeemer in whom they could hope for salvation, and warns them not to deprive themselves of that hope by contentions among themselves. By these words the Apostle teaches, also, that we, too, have great reason to praise God and thank Him, for calling us whose forefathers were heathens to the Christian faith, and to guard against losing our salvation by pride, envy, impurity &c.

Why should we read the scriptures?

That we may know what we are to believe and to do in order to be saved, as all scripture inspired of God, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice (*Tim.* iii. 16.); that we may learn from that which Christ has done for us, and the Saints for Christ, to be patient in our sufferings, and to be consoled and encouraged in hope by their example. To derive this benefit from the scriptures they must be read by the light of that spirit through whose assistance they came into existence, who lives and remains forever with the Church: that is, the light of the Holy Ghost must be sought, that their meaning may be read according to the sense of the Church and not be explained by the reader's own judgment.

He who reads the Holy Scriptures merely to satisfy his curiosity, his enquiring spirit, and his quarrelsome temper, following his own private judgment in interpreting and explaining the many obscure passages, subject to so many different renderings, without considering that only the Holy Ghost, through whose in-

spiration the Bible exists, is and can be its only true and veritable expounder, that this Holy Ghost is working in the true Church only, and that this Church alone through the Holy Ghost, whom Christ has promised, shall remain with her for all time, can interpret them, he who without reflecting upon this reads the Holy Scriptures by the light of his own private judgment simply, must, as experience shows, of necessity diverge from the right path, become entangled in manifold doubts, and at last, lose the faith entirely. For this reason the head of the Catholic Church has most properly limited the reading of the Bible, not, as has been falsely asserted, unconditionally forbidden it, and allows the reading of those editions only which are accompanied by notes and explanations in accordance with tradition and the exposition of the holy fathers, that the unity of faith may not be disturbed, and that among Catholics there may not be the terrible bewilderment of the human intellect which has taken place among the different heretical sects, who have even declared murder, bigamy and impurity to be permissable on the authority of the Bible.— We are to consider, also, that God never commanded the Bible to be written or read, and that not the readers but the followers of the word of God, by which is meant those who hear the words of God in sermons, and keep it, will be saved.*)

Why is God called a God of patience, of consolation, and of hope?

He is called a God of patience because He looks long on our sinful life, and awaits our repentance; of consolation because He gives us grace to be patient in crosses and afflictions, and so consoles us inwardly that we become not faint-hearted; of hope because He gives us the virtue of hope, and because He desires to be Himself the reward we are to expect after this life.

ASPIRATION. O God of patience, of consolation and of hope, fill our hearts with peace and joy, and grant that we may become perfect in all good, and by faith, hope and charity attain the promised salvation.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xi. 2—10.) Now when John has heard in prison the works of Christ: sending two of his disciples he said to Him: Art thou He that art to come, or look we for another? And Jesus making answer said to them: Go and relate to John what you have heard and seen. The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, the poor have the gospel preached to

*) Further instruction in regard to the doctrine of faith on this subject will be found in the "Instruction for Easter-Tuesday".

them. And blessed is he that shall not be scandalized in me. And when they went their way, Jesus began to say to the multitude concerning John: What went you out into the desert to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went you out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Behold they that are clothed in soft garments are in the houses of kings. But what went you out to see? A prophet? Yea, I tell you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written: Behold I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee.

Why was John in prison?

He was in prison and later lost his life, because he had rebuked king Herod for his adulterous marriage with his brother's wife (*Matt.* xiv. 10.). Truth, as the proverb says, is certainly a very beautiful mother, but she usually bears a very ugly daughter: Hatred. St. John experienced that speaking the truth very often arouses hatred and enmity against the speaker.— Let us learn from him to speak the truth always when duty requires it, even at the cost of the greatest misfortunes, for if with St. John we patiently bear persecution, with St. John we shall become martyrs of truth.

Why did St. John send his disciples to Christ?

That they should learn from Christ, who was already shining by His doctrines and His miracles, He was really the promised Messiah, the Saviour of the world, whom they should follow.

Why does Christ say to the disciples of St. John: "Go and say to John, the blind see, the lame walk etc."?

That they should by His miracles judge Him to be the Messiah, because the prophets had predicted that He would work such miracles (*Isai.* xxxv. 5, 6). "Christ", says St. Cyril, "proved that He was the Messiah by the grandeur as well as by the number of His miracles."

Why does Christ add: "And blessed is he who is not scandalized in me"?

Christ used these words in reference to those who would be scandalized by His poverty, humility and ignominious death on the cross, and who would, for these reasons, doubt and despise Him, and cast Him away; though "man", as St. Gregory says, "owes all the more love to the Lord, his God, the more humiliations He has born for him."

What was our Lord's object in the questions He asked concerning St. John?

His object was to remove from St. John, all suspicion of failing in faith in Him; to praise, as an example for all preachers, confessors, and superiors, that they might never be deterred by human respect, or fear of man, or other temporal consideration, from courageously fulfilling their duties, the perseverance with which St. John although imprisoned and threatened with death, continued to fill his office of preacher; and to commend the rigorous penance shown by his coarse garments and simple food, that we might learn from his example penance and mortify our bodies.

Why does Christ say that John is "more than a prophet"?

Because St. John was foretold by the prophet Malachy as was no other prophet; because of all the prophets he was the only one who with his own eyes saw Christ and could point His hand to Him,

and was the one to baptize Him: and because like an angel, a messenger of God, he announced the coming of the Saviour and prepared the way for the Lord.

How did St. John prepare the way for the Saviour?

By his sermons on penance, and by his own penitential life, he endeavored to move the hearts of the Jews, that by amending their lives, they might prepare to receive the grace of the Messiah. For God will not come with His grace into our hearts if we do not prepare His way by true repentance.

ASPIRATION. O Lord Jesus, by the praise Thou didst accord to Thy forerunner St. John, for his firmness and austerities, grant us Thy grace to have those confided to our care instructed in Christian doctrine, and inflame our hearts with such readiness to imitate his steadfastness and penance, that we may never do that to please man which may be displeasing to Thee.

CONSOLATION IN SUFFERING.

"The God of patience and of comfort, the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing." (*Rom.* xv. 5, 13.)

The fervent and strong believe that each and every thing that happens to us, comes to us for our own good from God, and that every evil, of whatever description that befalls us, is by the will or by the permission of God. "Good things and evil, life and death, poverty and riches, are from God". (*Eccl.* xi. 14.) «If we have received good things at the hand of God", (*Job.* ii. 10.) said the pious Job in his affliction, "why should we not receive evil?"

We should have the full persuasion that without the permission of God not a single hair of our head shall perish (*Luke* xxi. 18.), much less can other evil be done to us by man or devil (*Job.* i.); a steadfast confidence that if we ask Him, God can and will assist us in our sufferings, if it is good for our salvation that He should do so. "Can a woman forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? And if she should forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold I have engraven thee in my hands" (*Isai.* xlix. 15. 16.); the hope of abundant reward in the future life which we shall merit by patience in our sufferings, "For our present tribulation which is momentary and light, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory" (ii. *Romans* iv. 17.); the thought that all complaints and murmurs against the dispensation of God are useless, and lead only to shame and harm, "Who hath resisted Him, and hath had peace"? (*Joh.* ix. 4.) the vivid remembrance of our sins for which we have long

deserved eternal punishment in hell,—hence the well known saying of St. Augustine: "Here cut, O Lord, here scald and here burn, but spare me in eternity"; the consideration that no other way leads to the kingdom of heaven than the way of the cross, which Christ Himself. His sorrowing mother, and all the saints had to tread. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and so to enter into His glory?" (*Luke* xxiv. 26.); "through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God" (*Acts.* xiv. 21.); finally, the certainty that sorrows and adversities are signs of God's love, and of being chosen: "Whom the Lord loveth He chastiseth, and he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth"

PRAYER IN SORROW. Oh almighty, kind and merciful God! who hast said: "Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me" (*Ps.* xlix. 15.), behold I rely upon Thy word and take refuge with Thee in my trouble. Give honor to Thy name, therefore, and reserve me, if it be pleasing to Thee and well for me, that all may know Thou art our only help. Amen.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

N this Sunday again, the Church calls on us to rejoice in the Advent of the Redeemer, and at the Introit sings: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say rejoice! Let your modesty be known to all men: the Lord is nigh. Be not solicitous about any thing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgivings, let your petitions be made known to God (*Phil.* iv. 4—6). Lord, Thou hast blessed Thy land, Thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob. (*Ps.* lxxxiv. 1.) Glory be to the Father &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Bend Thine ear, O Lord, we beseech Thee, to our prayers, and enlighten the darkness of our minds by the grace of Thy visitation. Who livest &c.

EPISTLE. (*Phil.* iv. 4—7.) Brethren, rejoice in the Lord always; again, I say, rejoice. Let your modesty be known to all men: the Lord is nigh. Be nothing solicitous: but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgivings let your petitions be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasseth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

What is meant by „rejoicing in the Lord?“

By "rejoicing in the Lord" is meant rejoicing in the grace of the true faith we have received; in the hope of obtaining, by the grace of God, eternal happiness; in the protection of the most High under which we stand: and in the persecution for justice's sake in which Christ Himself exhorts us to rejoice, and in which the Apostle Paul so gloried. (ii. *Cor.* vii. 4.)

What else does St. Paul teach in this epistle?

He exhorts us to set to all a good example by a modest and edifying life, to which we should be directed by the remembrance of God's presence and His coming to judgment *(Chrysostom.* 33. *in Joann.)*; warns us against solicitude about temporal affairs, advising us to cast our care on God, who when we entreat Him in our needs with confidence and humility, grateful for graces received, will never abandon us.

In what does the „peace of God“ consist?

It consists in a good conscience *(Ambrose)*, in which St. Paul gloried and rejoiced beyond measure. (ii. *Cor.* i. 12.) This peace or quietness of the soul consoled all the martyrs and many other who have suffered for justice's sake. Thus St. Tibertius said to the tyrant: "We count all pain but little, for our conscience is at peace". There cannot be imagined a greater joy than that which proceeds from the peace of a good conscience. It must be experienced to be understood.

ASPIRATION. The peace of God that surpasseth all understanding preserve our hearts in Christ Jesus. Amen.

COMFORT AND RELIEF IN SORROW.

„Is any one troubled, let him pray.“ (*James.* v. 13.)

THere is no greater or more powerful comfort in sorrow than in humble and trusting prayer, to complain to God of our wants and cares, as did the sorrowful Anna, mother of the prophet Samuel (i. *Kings.* 10.), and the pure Susanna when she was falsely accused of adultery and sentenced to death (*Dan.* xiii. 35.). So the pious king Ezechias complained in prayer of the severe oppression with which he was threatened by Sennacherib (iv. *Kings.* xix. 14.). So also king Josophat made his trouble known to God only, saying: "Because we know not what to do, we can only turn our eyes to Thee“ (ii. *Paralip.* xx. 13). And they all received aid and comfort from God. Are you sad and in trouble? Lift up your soul with David and say: "To Thee I have lifted up my eyes, who dwellest in heaven! Behold as the eyes of servants are on the hands of their masters, as the eyes of the handmaid are on the hands of her mistress, so are our eyes unto the Lord our God, until

He shall have mercy on us. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us". (*Ps.* cxxii.) "Give joy to the soul of Thy servant, for to Thee, O Lord, I have lifted up my soul". (*Ps.* lxxxv. 4.)

GOSPEL. (*John.* i. 19—28.) And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent from Jerusalem priests and levites to him, to ask him: Who art thou? And He confessed and did not deny: and he confessed: I am not the Christ. And they asked him: What then? Art thou Elias? And he said: I am not. Art thou the prophet? And he answered: No. They said therefore unto him: Who art thou, that we may give an answer to them that sent us? What sayest thou of thy-

self? He said: I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaias. And they that were sent, were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said to him: Why then doest thou baptize, if thou be not Christ, nor Elias, nor the prophet? John answered them, saying: I baptize with water; but there hath stood one in the midst of you whom you know not. The same is he that shall come after me, who is preferred before me, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to loose. These things were done in Bethania beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Why did the Jews send messengers to St. John to ask him who he was?

Partly because of their curiosity, when they saw St. John leading such a pure, angelic and penitential life; partly, as St. Chrysostom says, out of envy, because St. John preached with such spiritual force, so baptized and exhorted the people to penance, that the inhabitants of Jerusalem came to him in great numbers; partly and principally they were impelled by the providence of God to demand publicly of St. John, if he was the Messiah, and so be directed to the real Messiah, to Christ, that they might be compelled to acknowledge Him as such, or have no excuse for rejecting Him.

Why did the Jews ask St. John, if he were not Elias or the prophet?

The Jews falsely believed, that the Redeemer was to come into this world but once, and then with great glory, and that Elias or one of the old prophets would come before Him, and prepare His way, as Malachy (iv. 6.) had prophesied of St. John; so when St. John said of himself that he was not the Messiah, they asked him, if then he were not Elias or one of the prophets. But Elias, who was taken alive from this world in a fiery chariot, will not reappear until just before the second coming of Christ.

Why did John say, he was not Elias or the prophet?

Because he was not Elias, and, in reality, not a prophet in the Jew's sense of the word, but more than a prophet, because he announced that Christ had come, and pointed Him out.

Why does St. John call himself "the voice of one crying in the wilderness"?

Because in his humility, he desired to acknowledge that he was only an instrument, through whom the Redeemer announced to the abandoned and hopeless Jews, the consolation of the Messiah, exhorting them to bear fruits worthy of penance.

How do we bear fruits of penance?

We bear fruits of penance, when, after our conversion, we serve God and justice with the same zeal with which we previously served the devil and vanity; when we love God as fervently as we once loved the flesh, — that is, the desires of the flesh, — and the pleasures of the world; when we give our members to justice as we once gave them to malice and impurity (*Rom.* vi. 19.), when the mouth that formerly uttered improprieties, when the ears that listened to detraction or evil speech, when the eyes that looked curiously upon improper objects, now rejoice in the utterance of words pleasing to God, to hear and to see things dear to Him; when the stomach that was given to the luxury of eating and drinking, now abstains; when the hands give back what they have stolen; in a word, when we put off the old man, who was corrupted, and put on the new man, who is created in justice and holiness of truth. (*Eph.* iv. 22. 24.)

What was the baptism administered by John, and what were its effects?

The baptism administered by John was only a baptism of penance for forgiveness of sins (*Luke* iii. 3.), and therefore did not, like the baptism afterwards instituted by Christ, effect the remission of sin; it merely was taken in connection with the St. John's sermons, to move to penance, and as an acknowledgment of sin.

What else can be learned from this gospel?

We learn from it to be always sincere especially at the tribunal of penance, and to practice the necessary virtue of humility, by which St. John confessed the truth openly and without reserve, in reply of the questions of the Jews, considering himself, as shown by the words: "the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to loose, as the lowest of Christ's servants, giving us thereby an example of humility and sincerity, which should induce us always to speak the truth, and not only not to seek honor but to give to God all the honor shown us by men.

Have you not far more reason than John, who was such a great saint, to esteem yourself but little, and to humble yourself before God and man? My son, says Tobias (iv. 14.), never suffer pride to reign in thy mind or in thy words; for from it all perdition took its beginning.

ASPIRATION. O Lord, banish from my heart all envy, all jealousy and pride. Grant me instead to know myself and Thee, that by the knowledge of my nothingness, my misery and of my vices, I may always remain unworthy in my own eyes, and that by the contemplation of Thine infinite perfections, I may seek to prize Thee above all, to love and to

glorify Thee, to look upon my neighbor as far more perfect than myself, and love him therefore from my heart. Amen.

EMBER WEDNESDAY IN ADVENT.

LESSON. (*Isai.* vii. 10—15. And the Lord spoke again to Achaz, saying: Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God, either unto the depth of hell, or unto the height above. And Achaz said: I will not ask and I will not tempt the Lord. And he said: Hear ye therefore, O house of David: Is it a small thing for ye to be grievous to men, that you are grievous to my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel. He shall eat butter and honey that he may know to refuse the evil and to choose the good.*)

EXPLANATION OF THE LESSON. In this lesson is contained the important prophecy of the Saviour's birth from a virgin. War was declared by the kings of Israel and Syria against Achaz, king of Juda, who at their approach was overpowered with fear, and thought of seeking aid from the Assyrians instead of looking to almighty God; and on account of this lack of confidence in the assistance of God, the prophet Isaiah was sent to announce to him the destruction of both the opposing kings, and his own preservation, desiring Achaz to prove the truth of his words by demanding a sign from God; but he, being given to idolatry, did not wish to ask a sign from heaven, for he had more faith in the assistance of the demons and of the Assyrians. Then, because he had offended God by his refusal, the prophet rebuked him, saying: The Lord himself will give you (that is, your posterity), a sign, for a virgin will conceive and bear a son and he shall be called Emmanuel, that is — God with us. By these words Isaiah desired to impress upon the king, that as surely as he should be preserved from his enemies, so surely this Emmanuel, the Son of the Virgin, the Redeemer of the world, would appear to redeem the world from Satan's power. — Let us learn from this lesson always to trust in God, who can deliver us from all danger, and let us also be grateful to Him who seven hundred and forty three years before the time, permitted the consoling coming of His Son, our Saviour, to be announced.

ASPIRATION. O Emmanuel, strong, holy God! Our Saviour and our Redeemer! be with us always in life and in death; for if Thou art with us who can be against us?

*) This lesson is read also on the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, and in the Rorate Masses, as is the gospel (*Luke* i. 26—28) belonging to this day, which will be found in the second part of this book in the instruction on the Annunciation.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that the approaching celebration of our redemption may bring us the necessary graces for the present life, and prepare us for the rewards of eternal happiness, through our Lord Jesus Christ &c.

EMBER FRIDAY IN ADVENT.

LESSON. (*Isai.* xi. 1—5.) And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root. And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and of godliness. And he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge according to the sight of the eyes, nor reprove according to the hearing of the ears. But he shall judge the poor with justice, and shall reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked. And justice shall be the girdle of his loins, and faith the girdle of his reins.

EXPLANATION. In this lesson the Lord announced to the Jews, through the prophet, the consoling promise that when they were sufficiently punished and had come to the consciousness of their own misery, the Saviour would come and bring all things to order. The rod, spoken of by the prophet, is the Blessed Virgin who would proceed from the root of Jesse, that is, from the stem of David, and give birth to the flower: the Saviour, in whom the Holy Ghost, with His sevenfold gifts would descend: as a reader of the heart He would judge man not according to his outward seeming, but his inward intentions: would not flatter the sinner, but with severe words punish his sinful life, and because He is just and faithful would reward every man without respect of persons.

Let us be always reminded in all our omissions and commissions, that our Lord sees into our hearts, and judges not only according to our works, but especially according to our intentions, and let us strive to have ever a pure motive in all our acts.

ASPIRATION. O Fragrant Flower of the Virgin, Jesus our Saviour, come and draw us to Thee, that we may walk in the perfume of Thy anointments, and obtain a merciful judgment from Thee.

The gospel of this day will be found in the second part of this book in the instruction on the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Arouse, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy power, that we who confidently trust Thy love, may be delivered from all adversities, who livest and reignest &c.

EMBER SATURDAY IN ADVENT.

EPISTLE. (ii. *Thess.* ii. 1—8.) And we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of our gathering together unto him, that you be not easily moved from your mind, nor be frighted neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle, as sent from us, as if the day of the Lord were at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means; for unless there come a revolt first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth, and is lifted up above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself as if he were God. Remember you not that when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now you know what withholdeth, that he may be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity already worketh: only that he who now holdeth, do hold, until he be taken out of the way. And then that wicked one shall be revealed whom the Lord Jesus shall kill with the spirit of His mouth: and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.

EXPLANATION. At the time when St. Paul wrote this epistle the false report was circulated that the Last Day was at hand, and Christ was coming to judgment. The Apostle warns the faithful against trusting this, telling them they should not permit themselves to be misled, for first the greater part of mankind would fall away from God, and Antichrist, the son of perdition, appear, and this not until the gospel was everywhere preached. The great falling off would be gradual, caused by the heresies which would arise from time to time, and completed by Antichrist, whom our Lord, at last, on the Judgment Day would kill with the breath of his mouth.

Let us learn from this epistle not to be curious concerning the Last Day and the coming of Christ, but to prepare rather, for the coming of Jesus into our hearts, that He may be merciful to us in death, and at the judgment.

ASPIRATION. Ah Jesus! when wilt Thou come and take my heart wholly into Thy possession, that I may be forever and ever Thine?

The gospel of this day will be found in the instruction on the Fourth Sunday of Advent.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who seeest us afflicted through our own wickedness; mercifully grant, that by Thy coming we may be comforted. Who livest.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

N this Sunday the Church manifests strongly her burning desire for the coming of the Redeemer, and, in the Introit, places the sighs of the just of the Old Law upon the lips of the faithful, again exhorting them through the gospel of the day, to real penance as the best preparation for the worthy reception of the Saviour, therefore she sings at the Introit: "Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the just; let the earth be opened and bud forth a Saviour!" (*Isai.* xlv. 8.) "The heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the works of his hands". (*Ps.* xviii. 1.)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Arouse, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy power and come! hasten with Thy powerful aid; that our redemption which is more and more removed from us by our sins, may be accelerated by the power of Thy grace through the excess of Thy mercies. Who livest and reignest &c.

EPISTLE. (i. *Corinth.* iv. 1—5.) Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God. Here now it is required among the dispensers that a man be found faithful. But to me it is a very small thing to be judged by you, or by man's day: but neither do I judge my own self. For I am not conscious to myself of anything, yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge not before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the councils of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise from God.

Why is this epistle read to-day?

The Church desires by this epistle to impress those who received Holy Orders on Ember Saturday with the dignity of their office, and exhorts them to fill it with becoming fidelity and sanctity, excelling the laity by piety and virtue as well as by official dignity. She wishes again to remind the faithful of the terrible coming of Christ to judgment, urging them by purifying their conscience through a contrite confession to receive Christ at this holy Christmas time, as their Saviour, that they may not behold Him, in future, as their severe judge.

How should the priest be regarded?

As the servant, house-keeper, and vicar of Christ; as dispenser of the holy mysteries; as ambassador of the Most High. (i. *Cor.* iv. 1., vi. *Cor.* v. 20.) For this reason God earnestly commands honor to the priest (*Eccl.* vii. 31.), and Christ says of the Apostles and their successors (*Luke* x. 16.): Who despiseth you, despiseth me; and St. Paul writes (i. *Tim.* v. iv.): Let the priests who rule well be esteemed worthy of double honor; especially they who labor in the word and doctrine.

Can the priest dispense the sacraments according to his own will?

No, he must have power from the Church, and must exercise his office faithfully, in accordance with the orders of the Church, and act only as willed by Christ whose house-keeper he is. The priest dare not give that which is holy to dogs (*Matt.* vii. 7.), that is, he is not permitted to give absolution and administer the sacraments to impenitent, and, therefore, unworthy persons, under penalty of being damned with them.

Why does St. Paul consider the judgment of men as a small thing?

Because it is usually false, deceived, foolish, and is consequently not worth seeking or caring for, for man often counts as evil that which is in itself good and pleasing to God, and, on the contrary, esteems as good that which is evil and damnable, and displeases God. So, St. Paul says: If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. (*Gal.* i. 10.) Oh, how foolish, and what poor Christians, therefore, are they, who not to be unpleasant to man, so willingly adopt all silly customs, and fashions in dress, manners and appearance, making themselves contemptible to God, the angels and saints, whom to please is the only true honor and happiness! Recall the beautiful words of the Seraphic St. Francis: "Our worth is as we are worth to God, no more"; and learn from it, to fulfill your duties faithfully and be indifferent to the world's judgment and its praise.

Why does St. Paul not wish to judge himself?

Because no one, without a special revelation from heaven, can know if he is just in the sight of God or not, even though his

conscience may accuse him of nothing, for no one knows whether he merits the wrath or the love of God. (*Eccl.* ix. 1.) Thus St. Paul goes on to say, that though he was not conscious of any wrong, he did not judge himself to be justified, God only could decide upon that. Man should, certainly, examine himself as much as is in his power, to find if he has anything within him displeasing to God; but he should not, finding nothing, judge himself more just than others, but should consider that his mind's eyes may be dimmed, and fail to see that which God sees, and will reveal to others at the Judgment Day. So the Pharisees saw no fault in themselves, and counted themselves saintly perfect, yet our Lord cursed them.

ASPIRATION. O Lord, enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight no man living can be justified. (*Ps.* cxlii. 2.)

GOSPEL. (*Luke* iii. 1—6.) Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrach of Galilee, and Philip, his brother, tetrarch of Iturea and the country of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilina, under the high priests Annas and Caiphas: the word of the Lord was made unto John, the son of Zachary, in the desert. And he came into all the country about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of penance for the remission of sins: as it was written in the book of the sayings of Isaias the prophet: A voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight his paths. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways plain. And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Why is the time in which St. John commenced to preach so minutely described?

The Evangelist, contrary to his usual custom, describes the time so minutely, and enumerates so exactly and in their precise order the religious and civil princes in office, that, in the first place, it could not be denied that this was truly the time and the year in which appeared in this world the promised Messiah, whom John baptized, and the Heavenly Father declared to be His beloved Son, and because it shows the fulfillment of the pro-

phecy of the Patriarch Jacob (*Gen.* xlix. 10.) that when the sceptre would be taken away from Juda, that is, when the Jews would have no longer a king from their own tribes, the Saviour would come.

What is meant by: The word of the Lord was made to John?

It means that by an angel sent from God, or by a divine, inward inspiration, John was exhorted to preach penance, and to announce to the world the coming of the Lord, for which work he had prepared himself by a penitential, secluded life in intercourse with God. We may learn from it that we should not intrude ourselves into office, least of all into a spiritual office, but await the call from God to it, preparing ourselves by sincere testing of ourselves in solitude and quiet, by fervent prayer for the necessary light, by seeking the advice of our spiritual guide, and by a holy life.

What is meant by: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight his paths?

It means to make our hearts worthy for the reception, so replete with grace, of Christ, by penance, amendment of the present, and the preparation for a pious life. To do this, every valley should be filled, that is, all faint-heartedness, sloth and cowardice, all wordly, carnal sentiments should be thrown out of the heart, and their place filled up with a firm confidence in God, or ardent desire of eternal goodness, and the exercise of heavenly virtues, reaching towards God, the highest good; the mountains and hills should be brought low, that is, pride, stubborness and ambition should be humbled, and the obstinate will be broken. The crooked shall be made straight, that is, ill gotten goods should be restituted, hypocrisy and malice, and double dealing be pushed aside, and all motives be turned to God and His holy will. And the rough ways shall be made plain, which means, anger, revenge, and impatience must leave the heart, if the Lamb of God is to dwell there.

And also it may signify that the Saviour put to shame the pride of the world, and its false wisdom, by building His Church upon the Apostles, who, by reason of their poverty and simplicity, may be considered the low valleys, while the way to heaven, formerly, because of the lack of grace, so rough and hard to tread, is now by His grace made smooth and easy.

ASPIRATION. Would that my heart, my Jesus! was well prepared and smooth for Thee! Effect Thyself, my Saviour, that which of myself I cannot do. Make me an humble valley, fill me with Thy grace; turn my crooked and perverted will to Thy pleasure; change my rough and angry disposition, throw away and soften in me whatever is in Thy way, that Thou mayst come to me unimpeded, and Thou alone possess and rule me forever. Amen.

INSTRUCTION ON THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

John preached the baptism of penance for the remission of sins. (*Luke* iii. 3.)

What is penance, and how many kinds of penance are there?

PEnance, says the Roman Catechism (*Cat. Rom. d. Pœnit.* 54.), consists in this, that we turn with our whole soul to God, hate and detest the crimes we have committed, firmly resolving to amend our life, its evil habits, and corrupt ways, not without hope that through the mercy of God, we may obtain pardon. This is interior penance and the virtue of penance. The sincere acknowledgment of our sins to a priest and the absolution he accords, is exterior

penance and the holy Sacrament of Penance, which Christ instituted (*John* xx. 20, 22, 23.), through which the sins of the contrite penitent, committed after baptism, are remitted.

Which of these is necessary for the forgiveness of sin?

Both are necessary, for unless the conversion of the heart to God, a true consciousness and sorrow for sin, the firm purpose of amendment and confidence in God's mercy, precede it, confessing all our sins to a priest cannot obtain forgiveness for any great or mortal sin, committed after baptism. At the same time, a really contrite turning to God, will not, without confession to a priest, obtain forgiveness, except in the case of a person being prevented, but ardently desiring to make a confession, and actually doing so, afterwards, when possible.

Can any one who has committed mortal sin be saved without penance?

No, for penance is as necessary to such a one as baptism if he wishes not to perish: Unless you do penance, says Christ, you shall all likewise perish. (*Luke* xiii. 3. 5.)

Is this penance performed all at once?

This penance is necessary every day of our lives: that is, we must strive from day to day to be heartily sorry for our sins, to despice them, to eradicate the roots of sin, that is, our passions and evil inclinations, and by penance and good works become more pleasing to God.

How happens it that so many die impenitent?

Because they do not accept and use the many graces God offers them, but put off their repentance. If such sinners, like the godless king Antiochus (ii. *Mach.* ix.), intend to repent on their deathbed for fear of punishment, they usually find, God, most justly, will no longer permit them sincerely to repent, for who will not when he can, cannot when he will. "Who will not listen at the time of grace", says St. Gregory, "will not be listened to in the time of anxiety." And it is to be feared that he who postpones penance for his old age, will find justice where he looked for mercy.

Can all sinners do penance?

With the grace of God all can, even the greatest sinners; for God calls them as a real father when He says: As I live... I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways: and why will ye die, O house of Israel? And the wickedness of the wicked shall not hurt him, in what day soever he shall turn from his wickedness. (*Ezech.* xxxiii. 11. 12.)

Do all who go to confession perform true penance?

Unfortunately, not all who confess; for with confession all is not accomplished. If there is no deep detestation of sin, its malice, shame, and evil; no interior heartsorrow for the offence to God; if the evil inclinations and bad habits are not eradicated; the ill gotten goods restored, and the calumny repaired; the occasions of sin avoided; and if a sincere amendment of life, or, at least, its earnest purpose does not follow and is not attempted, then, indeed there cannot be the least shadow of true repentance there, not even though such persons confessed weekly. And alas! how many such do we not now see? And why? Because many think, repentance consists simply in confession, and not in the amendment of their life. Only those obtain pardon in confession who are truly penitent, and perform all that is enjoined on them in confession. It is well, therefore, to read and carefully act according to the following instructions.

I. ON THE EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE.

The foundation of all true repentance, both of the interior and exterior (see the preceding pages), is the vivid knowledge of our sins. Precisely for want of this knowledge, we see many blinded by selflove, who are unconscious of the greatest and most grievous sins, in which they are buried, indeed, do not even regard them as sins, therefore not only do not do penance for them, but do not even confess them, and so are eternally lost. To prevent this great evil, the Council of Trent (*Sess.* 14. c. 5.) ordered a careful examination of conscience before confession, and afterwards to confess the sins which were discovered by that examination.

Why should we examine our conscience?

Because, as St. Ignatius says, no one can become fully aware of his own faults, unless God reveals them by a special light; we should, therefore, first of all, and even every day, ask the Holy Ghost to enlighten us, and should then reflect upon our thoughts, desires, words, actions, and omissions of the good we are commanded to perform, since our last valid confession, and whether we have sinned in these respects. To know this, we should let our conscience, that is, the inner voice which tells us, what is good and what is evil, speak freely, without flattering ourselves, or passing it by negligently; as St. Charles Borromeo says, we should place before our eyes the Ten Commandments of God (and of the Church), and carefully compare our life and our morals with them; it is well also to go through the list of the seven deadly sins, to think over the place where we live, and the persons with whom we live; the duties of our state of life, the vices to which we are most inclined, the consequences that were, or might have been produced upon ourselves or others. At the same time, we should imagine ourselves standing before the judgment-seat of God, and

whatever would cause us fear there, whatever we could not there answer for, we should look upon as sins, be sorry for, and confess.

Is it a sin not to examine ourselves long and carefully enough?

Certainly it is a sin for those who live unfaithfully and in mortal sin, and who seldom confess, to examine their consciences carelessly, because they expose themselves frivolously to the danger of leaving out great sins, consequently make an invalid confession, committing a new and grievous sin.

Those who daily ask God for enlightenment, and examine their conscience at least every evening before going to bed, will easily and properly examine their conscience before going to confession. "Behold, you have a book in which you write your daily expenses," says St. Chrysostom, "make a book of your conscience, also, and write there your daily sins. Before you go to bed, before sleep comes, take your book, your conscience, and recall your sins, whether of thought, word, or deed. Say then to your soul: Again, O soul, a day is spent, what have we done of evil or of good? If you have accomplished some good, be grateful to God; if evil, resolve to avoid it for the future. Shed tears in remembrance of your sins; ask forgiveness of God, and then let your body sleep."

II. ON CONTRITION.

"O man", cries St. Augustine, "why dost thou weep over the body whence the soul, and not over the soul whence God has departed?" The idolatrous Michas (*Judges* xviii. 23. 24.) complained bitterly, because his idols were taken from him. Esau grieved greatly over the loss of his birthright and his father's blessing (*Gen.* xxvii. 34.), and why should we not be filled with sorrow, because by our sins we have lost God, God's grace, and heaven?

What is contrition, and how many kinds of contrition are there?

"Contrition", says the Council of Trent (*Sess.* 14. c. 4.), "is a pain of the soul, a detestation of sins committed, and the resolve to sin no more. If this grief and detestation comes from a temporal injury, shame, or punishment, it is a natural sorrow; but if we are sorry for our sins, and detest them, because by them we have offended God, and have transgressed and dishonored His holy will, it is a supernatural sorrow; and is imperfect if we are sorry for having offended God, because He punishes sin by temporal and eternal punishment, and by exclusion from heaven, and perfect if we are sorry for our sins and detest them, because they have offended God, the supreme Lord, the best and loveliest Good, the dearest Father.

Is the natural sorrow sufficient for a good confession?

It is not, because it proceeds not from the love of God, whom alone we offend by our sins, but from the love or fear of the world.

Simply a sorrow of the world for our sins because of their temporal evils, worketh death (ii. *Cor.* vii. 10.); that is, it causes him who confesses his sins with only a natural sorrow for them, to commit a new mortal sin, because a necessary part of the Sacrament of Penance is wanting.

What other attributes are necessary for a true contrition?

Contrition should, also, be heartfelt, that is, the sinner must hate and detest his sins, be angry with himself for them, and be desirous of making all right again; it should be universal, that is, it must cover all the mortal sins he knows himself to have committed, without a single exception; it must be sovereign, that is, he must hate and detest nothing more than a grievous sin, and this because it so greatly offends God.

What kind of sorrow obtains forgiveness of sin?

That sorrow which proceeds from a perfect love of God, and which causes the sinner to abominate his sins for God's sake, and not for fear of temporal or eternal punishment. This perfect contrition would even suffice for the forgiveness of sins, if, as for instance, in the case of danger of death, there should be the greatest desire, but no opportunity to confess to a priest.

But the Holy Catholic Church has declared (*Conc. Trid.* s. 14. c. 4.) the imperfect contrition which proceeds from the knowledge of the shamefulness of sin, or from the fear of eternal punishment in hell, to be sufficient for a valid reception of the holy Sacrament of Penance.

Who are those who have reason to fear they have aroused only a natural sorrow for their sins, or no sorrow at all?

Those who care little about knowing what true sorrow is; those who often commit grievous sins, and do not amend their life; for if these had aroused a true sorrow for sin in their hearts, their purpose of amendment, and their use of the necessary means for carrying it out, would be firmer, and, by the grace of God in this Sacrament, they would be made strong to avoid sin, at least for a time; because they do not do this, one can justly doubt whether they had a true sorrow, whether they have validly received the Sacrament of Penance and its sanctifying grace; and those are to fear who are not sorry for their sins, and avoid them, until they have been brought to shame, mockery, or calamity by them.

How can the sinner attain true sorrow?

The sinner can attain true sorrow by the grace of God and his own cooperation with it. That both are necessary, is shown by the prophet Jeremias (*Jer.* xxxi. 18.) who prays: Convert me, O Lord, and I shall be converted; for Thou art the Lord, my God. For after Thou didst convert me, I did penance, and after Thou didst shew unto me, I struck my thigh (with sorrow). To which God replies: If thou wilt be con-

verted, I will convert thee (*Jer.* xv. 19.). The grace of God is, therefore, the first and greatest necessity for the sorrow which converts the heart. It must begin and complete the work of conversion, but it will do this only when the sinner earnestly and faithfully cooperates with it. This cooperation is shown in the following manner (*Conc. Trid. sess.* vi. c. 6.): After the sinner, whom God, in whatever way, has admonished that he should be converted, has ardently implored God for the grace of a true conversion, has perhaps invoked the intercession of the Mother of the Saviour, his guardian angel, and the holy penitents, such as David, Peter, Magdalen, he meditates upon the truth that God is a just judge, who hates sin, and will punish it in the next world, in the eternal torments of hell; having placed this certainty vividly before his eyes, he reflects whether, by his sins, he has not himself deserved this punishment, and if by the enlightenment of God he finds he has, he will also see the danger in which he now is, that is, that if God should allow him to die impenitent, he would have to suffer forever in hell; this fear of eternal punishment forces the sinner to hope in God's mercy, through the merits of Christ who has atoned for our sins; he recollects that God has sworn that He wishes not the death of the sinner, and that our Redeemer said, that He came to call the sinner to repentance, and that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who does penance, than over ninety nine just, by which his heart is moved, and excited to confidence in God; he considers the patience with which God has so long waited for him, and the goodness which, during his sinful life, has heaped favors and graces upon him; he thinks of his creation by the supreme Heavenly Father, of his redemption by the most precious blood of the Son of God, of his sanctification in baptism when he became a child of God, and his heart the dwelling place of the Holy Ghost; he recalls how often and how paternally God has warned him by good books, by persons, by his own conscience, how ungratefully he had forgotten all these graces and favors, despised and trampled on them by his sins; he will then hate his sins, and because of love for God who in spite of them has not cast him off, he will be sorry for them. But he will not rest here, he will go on to contemplate the beauty and perfection of God: "Who art Thou, O my God", he cries, "who art Thou who hast loved me with such an unspeakable love, and lovest me still, ungrateful, abominable sinner, though I am! What is all the beauty of this world, of the angels and of the blessed spirits compared to Thine! Thou fountain of all beauty, of all goodness, of all that is amiable, Thou supreme majesty, Thou infinite abyss of love and mercy! I for one vain glorious thought, a short, momentary pleasure, a small, mean gain, could forget, offend and despise Thee! Could sell, could forfeit heaven, and eternal joy with Thee! O, could I make good those crimes! Could I but wash them out with my tears, even with my blood!" Through

such meditations the sinner, by the grace of God, will be easily moved to sorrow. But without such meditations, or to read or say by heart the formulas of sorrow or contrition in a prayerbook is to pray, but not to make acts of contrition. This would by no means suffice, because sorrow consists not in words, but in the pain and disgust of a contrite heart.

Should we make an act of contrition before confession only?

We should make an act of contrition before confession, and not only then, but every evening after the examination of conscience, we should make one together with a firm purpose of amendment, also immediately after any fault committed, over all when in danger of death; for we know not whence and when God will call us to judgment, or whether we shall then have the grace to receive the Sacrament of Penance with proper preparation.

III. ON THE PURPOSE OF AMENDMENT.

The purpose of amending our life is as necessary as contrition for the remission of sin; for how could he obtain forgiveness from God, who has no intention of ceasing to offend Him? However, he who is truly contrite, has also a firm purpose of amendment, for the will to sin cannot exist with the hatred of sin.

What is necessary for a firm purpose, and how can it be known if the right purpose is had in going to confession?

A firm purpose of amendment requires: The avoidance of sin, and especially those in whose society sin is most usually committed; the flying from all occasions that might bring the danger of sinning, all persons, places, societies in which we usually sin; and in bravely fighting ourselves, our evil inclinations and bad habits; making use of all means prescribed by the confessor, or made known to us by God Himself; repairing the injustice and injury we have done; giving back the injured name of our neighbor, removing the scandal and enmity we have caused, &c. Of him who carefully observes these things, we can say that he has a right purpose.

Who, then, have no true purpose of amendment?

Those who do not leave the frivolous persons with whom they have associated and committed sin; those who do not diligently remove the occasions of cursing, swearing carelessly, getting drunk, and committing secret sins, &c.; those who borrow or make debts which they know they cannot pay, or do not even care to pay; those who squander away the property of women and children, letting them suffer want; those who sit day and night in barrooms, or saloons in the midst of fighting, gambling, vile, filthy conversation, and detraction, taking away the good name of others, murmuring against spiritual and temporal superiors, &c.; throwing away precious time, bringing, even compelling others to do the

same. The saloon-keepers, who for money's sake allure such wretched people, keep them there, and what is still worse, help to intoxicate them, participate in their sins. All these, not having a firm purpose of amendment, are unfit for absolution.

IV. ON CONFESSION.

Confession is a contrite acknowledgment of our sins in order to obtain forgiveness for them, to a priest ordained, in the name of the Church, by a bishop, and is, on this account, an important and necessary part of the holy Sacrament of Penance.

Even in the Old Law, a certain kind of confession before a priest was prescribed, and connected with a sacrifice, called the sacrifice of Atonement; but the forgiveness of sins was effected only through faith in the coming Redeemer, towards whom this sacrifice pointed. (*Lev.* v. 5, 6. *Num.* v. 7.; *compare Matt.* iii. 6.) In the New Law, Christ gave to the apostles and their successors, power to forgive sins, and to retain them (*John* xx. 21—23.), and in doing so made them judges. Without confession on the part of the sinner, they cannot act as judges, and do justice in regard to giving punishment and remedies (*Conc. Trid. sess.* 14. c. 6.). And as the sinner is but seldom able to make an act of perfect contrition, which obtains the forgiveness of sin without confession, it was necessary that the most merciful Lord, as the Roman Catechism says (*de pæn.* 5. 36.), through the means of confession to the priest, should care in an easier manner for the common salvation of man. Confession is, besides, the best means of bringing man to a knowledge of his sins and of their malice. Therefore even Adam was expressly obliged to acknowledge his sins, and in the same way Cain was asked by God concerning his brother's murder, although God, the Omniscient, knew the sins of both. Finally, the desire to ease the troubled conscience, seems born in man. Thus David says of his crime: Because I was silent, my bones grew old, whilst I cried out all the day long (*Ps.* xxxi. 3.); and in the book of Proverbs it is said: He that hideth his sins, shall not prosper; but he that shall confess and forsake them, shall obtain mercy. (*Prov.* xxviii. 30.) Constant experience in life verifies these words, and the heretics could not entirely abolish private confession, though they rejected the Sacrament of Penance.

Is confession a human law, or human invention?

No, confession is instituted by Christ Himself; for after His resurrection He appeared to His apostles and disciples, and said to them: Peace be with you! As the Father hath sent me, I also send you; that is, the same power to remove sin from man, and to sanctify him, which the Father hath given me, I give to you. When he had said this, he breathed on them, and he said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained. (*John* xx. 21—24.; *compare Matt.* xviii. 18.) In these words Christ evidently gave to the apostles and to the priests, their successors, the power to forgive sins, or to retain them. But this they can do only, when the sins are made known to them, are confessed to them; and, therefore, Christ when instituting the forgiveness of sins, instituted and connected with it the acknowledgment, that is, confession of sins. This regulation of Christ was complied with by the first Christians in humbleness of heart, as is proved in the Acts of the apostles, where we read: And many (referring to the Christians at Ephesus), and many of those who believed, came confessing and declaring their deeds. (*Acts.* xix. 18.) And the apostle James exhorts his own: Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray one for another that you may be saved. (*St. James* v. 16.) And as the work founded by Christ, must stand as long as the world, and as the apostles and disciples of our Lord died, their successors necessarily continued the work, and received the same power from Christ. This is verified by the whole history of His Church. In the very beginning of Christianity, the faithful confessed to the priest, with sorrow, all their transgressions, even the smallest and most secret, after which they received absolution for their sins. "Let us be sincerely sorry as long as we live," says St. Clement of Rome, a disciple of St. Paul (*Ep.* 1. *ad Cor.*), "for all evil which we have committed in the flesh, for having once left the world, there will no longer be any confession and penance for us." Tertullian (217 after Christ) writes of those who hid their sins being ashamed to confess them: "Can we also hide from the knowledge of God that which we conceal from a fellow creature?" (*Lib. de pœn.* 5. 36.) Origen († 254), after speaking of baptism, says: "There is still a severer and more tedious way of obtaining remission of sin: when the sinner moistens his pillow with tears, and is not ashamed to confess his sins to the priest of the Lord." (*Hom.* 3. *in Lev.*) St. Cyprian († 258) writes of those Christians who during the persecutions of his time, had not sinned by plainly denying the faith: "Yet because they had but thought of doing so, they make a sorrowful and simple confession to God's priests." (*Lib. de laps.*) Basil († *A. D.* 379) writes: "Necessarily the sins must be made plain to those to whom the power of the mysteries is confided, that is, the priests." (*In reg. brev.* 288.) Many more testimonials could be brought from the earliest centuries of Christianity, which make it clear, that Christ Himself instituted confession, and that the faithful always availed themselves of it as a means of remission from sin. How would it otherwise have been possible for a human being, though he were the mightiest prince, to have imposed, without the special command of Christ, the Son of God, such a hard command as confession upon all Catholic Christianity,

or even to have invented it without the faithful at once revolting against it; and how possible, besides, that in the oriental Churches which separated from the true Church in the earliest ages, private confession to a priest is yet valid as a divine institution, if it is but a human invention? The Catholic institution of confession, with which, in the earliest centuries, there was even connected a public confession, before the whole congregation, for notorious sinners, is as old as the Church itself, as Pope Leo the Great († 461) proves (*Ep.* 136): "The secret, auricular confession was introduced into the Church as early as the times of the apostles, or their immediate successors." It was instituted by Christ, the God-Man, and instituted for the purpose of enabling the apostles and the priests, their successors, to remit in the confessional the sins committed after baptism, if the sinner heartily regrets them, sincerely confesses, and renders satisfaction for them, or to retain them if he is unworthy of absolution. From this it is seen that the enemies of the Catholic Church, oppose, in rejecting confession, the plain expression of the holy Scriptures, and of entire Christian antiquity, and that it is a detestable calumny to assert that confession is simply a human invention. The divine institution of confession always was and is a fountain of sweetest consolation for sinful man, and thousands have experienced that which is said by the Council of Trent (*Sess.* 14. c. 3. *de part*): "The effect of this Sacrament is reconciliation with God, followed often times, in pious men and those who devoutly receive this Sacrament, by peace and happiness of conscience, with deep consolation of the mind."

What should aid in making confession easier?

The repeated consideration of the manifold benefits arising from it; that by it forgiveness of all, even of the most grievous sins, is received, and the eternal guilt and punishment entirely remitted; the certainty of having again been made a child of God; the sweet consolation and desired peace of conscience; the necessary remedies which a pious and prudent confessor will prescribe for the cure of the soul's diseases; finally, the prayer and exhortation of the priest which will also add to the complete conversion of the sinner.

What should be done to participate in these benefits?

Besides that which has already been said of the examination of conscience, and especially of sorrow for sin, there must be in confession a sincere heart opening; that is, a correct and exact confession not only of all grievous, mortal sins, their kind, circumstances and number, without excuses, or veiling or lessening of them, but also a faithful revelation of all other spiritual affairs, fears, doubts, and other soul wounds in general; for a wound which is not shown to the physician, cannot be healed; those confessors who are only "mute dogs" (*Isai.* lvi. 10.), and give absolution

without hesitation, should not be consciously sought after, but, when possible, we should trust ourselves to learned, pious, and zealous priests, keep to them as in physical sickness to an experienced physician, and accept their words as if Christ Himself had spoken.

How should the false shame which prevents confession be overcome?

It should be remembered that not a human being, but Christ Himself sits in the confessional, and that whoever lies to the confessor, seeks to deceive God Himself, who abominates a lie, and at the Last Day will publicly put such a liar to shame. The confessor takes the place of Christ, and after His example must be merciful to the sinner if, a sinful man himself, he hopes to receive mercy and grace from God. At the same time, no confessor is allowed to make public the slightest thing heard in confession, even if it should cost him his life. It may be considered further that he who conceals a sin in confession, and thus obtains absolution by false pretences, receives no remission, but, on the contrary, commits a new sin. "When man uncovers his sins, God covers them; when man conceals his sins, God reveals them," says St. Augustine. Man can be lied to and deceived, but not God, the Omniscient; and who is ashamed to show his wounds to the physician? Why should it be a cause of shame to throw out the poison of sin by a sincere confession? To sin is shameful only, to confess sin is not shameful. But if by all these reflections we are still unable to so overcome ourselves as to confess our sins to this or that confessor, we can look for one in whom we have confidence, or to whom we are strangers.

V. ON SATISFACTION OR PENANCE AFTER CONFESSION.

Satisfaction or penance after confession consists, in so far as it belongs to the Sacrament of Penance, in the diligent performance of all the works of penance imposed upon us by the confessor. With this, however, a true penitent will not be satisfied; for as in our times, on account of the weakness and small zeal of Christians, a light penance is imposed that they may not be deterred from the reception of the holy Sacraments, a true penitent will voluntarily impose penance upon himself, and, if he does not wish to fall back, he must once for all perform penance, and bring forth fruits worthy of it. (*Luke* xiii. 3.) God cannot be induced to give the grace of perseverance, otherwise than by the penance by which we punish ourselves for the offences committed against Him. The luxurious flesh will not cease to sin, if it is not continually punished. Because they omit the voluntary penance it happens that so few sinners after confession persevere in virtue and keep their promises and good resolutions. Those who love their souls, should be careful, besides the exact performance of the penance given in confession, to render, by fasting, prayer, almsdeeds, avoidance of

the world, diffidence in themselves, and especially by patient endurance of the afflictions and sufferings God imposes as penance, to His Majesty as complete satisfaction as possible for their sins, or endanger their salvation, or risk being forced, in the next world to perform severe and ever lasting penance.

Is the unbeliever right in asserting that, because Christ on the cross has already rendered complete satisfaction, man does not need to render any?

He is entirely wrong. Christ on the cross did indeed render satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, and man is not in the condition to render the indispensable satisfaction for one single sin, but it does not follow from this that man is not required to render something. To render satisfaction means to do something for that which has been committed. Instead of obeying God, the sinner, by his sins, disobeys God. Satisfaction for disobedience requires perfect obedience from the sinner; but this, because of his weakness and corruption, no man is able to render, therefore Christ rendered it for us by His perfect obedience even unto the death of the cross. But because Christ has been thus obedient for us, must we not be somewhat obedient, too? or what is the same, because Christ for love of us has atoned for our sins by perfect obedience to His Heavenly Father, are we to do no penance for ourselves? It is precisely by this atonement made by Christ that we receive the power of rendering satisfaction. But for this we must, first of all, ask the grace (prayer) to restrain our earthly desires (fasting), and by means of active love (charity) make ourselves susceptible to this grace. This it is that St. Paul the Apostle, who calls himself the greatest of sinners, writes of himself: Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up those things that are wanting for the sufferings of Christ in my flesh for his body, which is the Church (*Col.* i. 24.); and to the Corinthians he writes: But I chastise my body and bring it into subjection; lest perhaps when I have preached to others (meaning: of penance and conversion), I myself should become cast away (i. *Cor.* ix. 27). Christ Himself did not censure the Ninivites for their fasting and their penance in sackcloth and ashes, but used them as an example. (*Matt.* xii. 27.) And in the Old Testament we find that even after remitting the sin, God imposed a punishment for it. Thus He let the child of King David die, as punishment for his adultery, even though He had forgiven the sin (ii. *Kings* xii. 13, 14.); thus Moses and Aaron, because they once distrusted God, were not permitted to enter the Promised Land. (*Num.* xx. 24; *Deut.* xxxiv. 4.) According to this doctrine of the Bible, the Catholic Church teaches that though truly on account of the infinite merits of Christ and in His name, the eternal guilt and punishment of sin are taken away, in confession, by the abso-

lution given by the priest, there remains a temporal punishment, which the sinner must expiate either in this world or in the next; for this reason, in the earliest times of the Church certain works of penance were imposed, which were then very severe, and in the course of time, owing to the indolence of the faithful, were very much moderated.

INSTRUCTION FOR CHRISTMAS EVE.

Et us therefore make him a little chamber, and put a little bed in it for him, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick, that when he cometh to us, he may abide there". (iv. *Kings*, iv. 10.) Such was the Sammamite woman's regard for the prophet Eliseus that she would make such preparations for his entertainment! Will we do as much for Christ who is ready to come to us? Take pains, O Christian, to occupy this night in pious thoughts, and aspirations, for the love of God and for the good of your own soul, making yourself worthy to receive the graces which He is ready when he comes, to give you. Think how St. Joseph, and Mary, his holy spouse, who was very near her time, obedient to the imperial command, and perfectly submissive to the will of God, journeyed with the greatest inconvenience to Bethlehem, and when, because of the multitude of people, they found no place to receive them, they stayed, as God willed it, in a most miserable stable at the extreme end of the town. What love does not the Saviour deserve who for love of us so humbled Himself!

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who givest us to rejoice yearly in the expectation of our redemption, grant, that Thy only begotten Son, whom we receive with joy as our Saviour into our hearts, may be seen by us with confidence, when He shall come into the world as its judge. Through Thy Son Christ Jesus, our Lord, who livest &c.

INSTRUCTION FOR CHRISTMAS DAY.

What is Christmas Day?

IT is the day on which Christ Jesus, our Redeemer and our Joy, was born of the Blessed Virgin in a stable at Bethlehem.

Why is this festival called "the Holy Night?"

Because this night has been especially blessed and sanctified by the holy, mysterious birth of the Redeemer of the world.

Why are there three Masses said on this day?

In commemoration of the threefold birth of the Redeemer: of His birth from all eternity in the bosom of His Heavenly Father; of His birth in the fulness of time; and of His spiritual birth in the hearts of the pious who, by lively faith in Him, receive the power to become children of God. (*John* i. 2.)

Why is the first Mass said at midnight?

Because Christ, the true light which came into the world to enlighten those who stood in darkness and the shadow of death, that is, of unbelief and of sin (*Luke* i. 79.), was born at night, and because the divine birth is incomprehensible to us.

Why is the next Mass said at daybreak, and the third in broad daylight?

To signify that the birth of Christ, expelling the darkness of ignorance and infidelity, brought us the clear daylight of the knowledge of God, and that the spiritual birth of Christ can take place at any time in the pure soul.

When does this spiritual birth take place?

It takes place when the soul, having been cleansed from all sin, makes the firm, unalterable resolution to die to the world and all carnal desires, and arouses in itself the ardent desire henceforth to live only for Christ, and, by His grace, to practise all the virtues.

INSTRUCTION ON THE FIRST MASS.

The Introit of this Mass speaks of the eternal birth of Christ, the Lord. The Lord hath said to me: "Thou art my Son, this day (that is, from all eternity) I have begotten thee!" (*Ps.* ii. 7.) Why have the gentiles raged, and the people devised vain things? (*Ps.* ii. 1.) Glory be to the Father &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who hast illumined this most blessed night with the splendor of the true light, grant that we may enjoy the happiness of that light in heaven, whose mysterious apparition we have recognized on earth. Through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who livest &c.

EPISTLE. (*Titus* ii. 11—14.) Dearly Beloved! The grace of God our Saviour hath appeared to all men, instructing us that, denying ungodliness and worldly desires, we should live

soberly, and justly, and godly in this world, looking for the blessed hope, and coming of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and might cleanse to himself a people acceptable, a pursuer of good works.

In what special manner has the grace and goodness of God been manifested to us?

In the incarnation and birth of Christ, His Son, whom, in His infinite love, He has made like unto us, our brother and our teacher, by whom we have become children of God, and coheirs of His kingdom.

What does Christ by His incarnation especially desire to teach us?

That we should put aside all unrighteousness, all infidelity and injustice, and strive to become like Him, who, except in sin, has become altogether like unto us. But especially that we repress the desires of lust, wealth, and honor, and not rest until we have uprooted them from our heart.

How do we live soberly, justly, and godly?

We live soberly, when we fulfil all duties towards ourselves; justly, when we fulfil all duties to our neighbor; and godly, when we fulfil all duties to God: or, when we seek only our own salvation, the honor and glory of God, and do to our neighbors as we would have done to ourselves.

ASPIRATION. Blessed art Thou, O newborn Saviour, who hast descended from on high to teach me the ways of justice, hast become man and equal to me. In return for this goodness of Thine, I renounce all evil, all sinful desires, words, and deeds. In return for Thy love, I will ever uproot from my heart all carnal desires, and live always soberly, justly, and godly; and do Thou by Thy grace strengthen me in this resolve.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* ii. 1—14.) And it came to pass that in those days there went out a decree from Cesar Augustus, that the whole world should be enrolled. This enrolling was first made by Cyrinus, the governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee out of the city of Nazareth into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his espoused wife, who was with child. And it came to pass

that when they were there, her days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds watching, and keeping the nightwatch over their flock. And behold an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the brightness of God shone round about them, and they feared with a great fear. And the angel said to them: Fear not: for behold I bring you tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people; for this day is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, in

the city of David. And this shall be a sign unto you: you shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God, and saying: Glory to God in the highest: and on earth peace to men of good will.

Why, at the time of Augustus, were all the Roman subjects enrolled?

This was by special order of God, that Mary and Joseph should thus be obliged to go to Bethlehem, and it be made known to all the world, that Jesus was really born in Bethlehem, of the tribe of Juda and the house of David, that the predictions of the prophets were fulfilled, and that He was the Messiah. (*Mich.* v. 2.)

Let us learn from this how the providence of God directs all things according to His will, and consider the obedience which Mary rendered to the command of a heathen emperor, or to God who caused the command.

Why is Christ called the "first born" of Mary?

Because she gave birth to no child before Him; and as she had none after Him, He was the only Son of Mary as He was the only begotten Son of the Heavenly Father.

Why was Christ so poor born in a stable, and laid in a manger?

To teach, not by words, but by example, that which He afterwards so often preached, and so forcibly taught: the love of poverty, humility, patience, and contempt of the world; and to put to shame by this manner of His birth the foolish wisdom of the world which aims only for honor, pleasures, and riches.

Why was the birth of Christ announced to poor shepherds, and not to King Herod and the chief priests, &c.?

That it might be known that God loves to dwell with poor, simple, pious, faithful people, such as the shepherds were, and reveals Himself to those who are small in their own eyes; while He despises the proud and hands them over to their own spiritual blindness. (*Matt.* xi. 25.)

Let us learn from this to acquire simplicity and humility, and despise pride and cunning, that God may reveal Himself to us by His interior inspirations.

What is meant by the angelic song of praise: "Glory be to God on high"?

By this song of praise which the priests usually say in the holy Mass, the angels meant, that the greatest praise and the most heartfelt thanks are due to God, for He had sent His Son into the world; and that those who now had the good will to glo-

rify God by all their actions, would receive peace, that is, all happiness, blessings, and salvation.

Rejoice thou also with the angels over the birth of the Saviour; give thanks to Him, and honor to Him alone, so thou also wilt be given peace: peace with God, peace with thyself, peace with all men. Learn also from the angels, who rejoiced in the graces which man would receive from the birth of Christ, to rejoice and thank God for the favors which He gives thy neighbor, and by rejoicing participate in them.

INSTRUCTION ON THE SECOND MASS.

In the Introit of this Mass the Church avails herself of the Prophet Isaias: This day a light shall spread over us, because the Lord is born to us; He shall be called Wonderful, God, the Prince of Peace, the Father of the world to come, of whose kingdom there shall be no end (*Isai.* ix. 6.). The Lord hath reigned; he is clothed with beauty; the Lord is clothed with strength, and hath girded himself. (*Ps.* xcii. 1.)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant us, Almighty God, that the new light of Thy word, made flesh, may shine upon us in its fulness, and that the faith which illumines our minds, may be resplendent in our works.

EPISTLE. (*Titus* iii. 4—7.) But when the goodness and kindness of God our Saviour appeared: not by the works of justice, which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us, by the laver of regeneration, and renovation of the Holy Ghost, whom he hath poured forth upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour: that being justified by his grace, we may be heirs, according to hope of life everlasting.

To whom do we owe our salvation?

Not to ourselves and any good works we may have performed, but entirely to the mercy of God alone, who from all eternity decreed our redemption, and sent His only begotten Son into this world to accomplish it; which redemption is bestowed upon us in baptism, where we are washed from the stain of sin, and by the rich infusion of the Holy Ghost are born again, heirs of eternal life.

Why, then, had God no mercy on the fallen angels?

To this question St. John of Damascus replies: "We must know here that the fall was to the angels, what death is to man; for the angels there was no repentance after the fall, as for man there is no repentance after death". (*De fid. orthod. lib.* 2. *c.* 4.)

In eternity there is no available contrition and penance, so God showed no mercy to the fallen angels. Let us learn from this, while there is yet time, to make ourselves by contrition and penance participators in the mercy of God.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* ii. 15—20.) And it came to pass, after the angels departed from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another: Let us go over to Bethlehem, and let us see this word that has come to pass which the Lord hath shewed to us. And they came with haste: and they found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. And seeing, they understood of the word which had been spoken to them concerning this child. And all that heard wondered: and at those things that were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

INSTRUCTION. I. The shepherds follow at once the voice of God which calls them to the manger; they exhort one another to do so; they seek the Redeemer and happily find Him; they make Him known to others, and tenderly thank God for the grace given them.

Let us follow the inspirations of God with ready obedience; let us exhort one another to virtue by our good example and edifying conversation; let us make good use of the knowledge given us by God, give it to others, and praise God for it.

II. Mary kept all these words, spoken about her Son, and pondered them in her heart. Let us learn from her to make food for our souls by careful meditation of the divine truths that are made known to us: so that we may be preserved and strengthened in spiritual life.

INSTRUCTION ON THE THIRD MASS.

The Introit of this Mass reminds us of the spiritual birth of Christ, by which He is spiritually born in us: A child is born to us; and a son is given to us; and the government is upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor. (*Isai* ix. 6.) Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle; because he hath done wonderful things. (*Ps.* xcvii. 1.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that we who are bound in the old servitude,

bearing the yoke of sin, may by the incarnation of Christ Thy Son, which we celebrate to day, be freed from our bondage, through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, &c.

EPISTLE. (*Hebr.* i. 1—12.) God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these days hath spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world; who being the brightness of his glory, and the figure of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, making purgation of sin, sitteth on the right hand of Majesty on high: being made so much better than the angels as he hath inherited a more excellent name than they. For to which of the angels hath he said at any time, Thou art my son, to-day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. And again when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith: And let all the angels of God adore him. And to the angels indeed he saith: He that maketh his angels, spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But to the son: Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of justice is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved justice and hated iniquity; therefore, God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, in the beginning, O Lord, didst found the earth, and the works of thy hands are the heavens. They shall perish, but thou shalt continue: and they shall all grow old as a garment. And as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the selfsame and thy years shall not fail.

INSTRUCTION. The greatness of Christ Jesus, the dignity of His divinity and humanity, the love and goodness of His Heavenly Father, who has given Him to us as our teacher, could not be more gloriously described than in this epistle. Learn from it how much you are obliged, because of this, to serve God, to be grateful to Him, and to follow after Christ who governs heaven and earth, and whom the angels serve.

ASPIRATION. I thank Thee, a thousand times, O Heavenly Father, that Thou hast deigned to speak to us

through Thy only begotten Son, in whom Thou hast Thine only pleasure. With my whole heart, O Father of Mercy, will I listen to Him, and be obedient to all His instructions.

GOSPEL. (*John* i. 1—14.) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was made nothing that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men: and the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from heaven whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to give testimony of

the light, that all men might believe through him. He was not the light, but was to give testimony of the light. That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, he gave them power to be made the sons of God, to them that believe in his name. Who are born not of the blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (and we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.

What does St. John mean by the expression the Word?

That the Son of God, who was begotten and brought forth like a word of the mouth from the Father, but in a manner incomprehensible and inscrutable to us, is one with the Father in the divine nature, but different from Him in person; He is also called the Word of the Father, because through Him the Father has spoken and made known the divine will. (*Hebr.* i. 2.; *Matt.* xvii. 5.)

What is meant by: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God?

That the Son of God already was, when all things had their beginning, not made or created, but born of the Father from eternity, with whom and in whom He therefore existed from all eternity. St. John here teaches the divinity, the eternity, and the equality of Christ with the Father.

What is meant by: All things were made by Him?

That the Son of God, true God with the Father and the Holy Ghost, has made all things from the angels to the smallest worm. (*Comp. Coloss.* i. 16.)

What is meant by: In Him was the life?

It means: The Son of God is the origin and fountain of all the spiritual life of our soul upon earth, and of the glorious life in eternity. To give this true life to us, he became man, whereby we are born again, newly created, as it were, from the death of sin to the life of grace and righteousness.

Why is this life the light of men?

Because this true life of the soul which Christ has obtained for us and given us, consists in the ever increasing knowledge of God and his salvation, which knowledge also comes from Christ,

either externally through holy words and examples, or inwardly by divine inspiration.

How did the light shine in darkness?

In this manner, that the Son of God has always given, in different ways, the light of true knowledge to all men, even to the wicked, and to infidels, and especially so, by His example and His doctrines, since His incarnation. But the wicked closed their eyes to the light and perished. And now He gives the necessary light of knowledge to all men, especially by the preaching of His holy word, but the hardened sinners throw it from them, because they wish not to hear of faith, penance, and repentance.

How did St. John the Baptist give testimony of the light?

By announcing the Saviour to the world, and when He appeared, even pointing Him out.

Who receive Christ?

Those who walk in the light of His grace, cooperate with it, and so become the children of God.

How are we to understand: The Word was made flesh?

This is not to be understood to mean that the Word, that is, the Son of God, was changed into human nature, but to mean that He took upon Himself flesh from the Virgin Mary, and became man, having therefore two natures inseparably united in Himself: the divine and the human. So Christ is true God, and at the same time true man, therefore God-Man. From this it follows, that Christ in His humanity is less than His Father (*John* xiv. 28.), but in His divinity is equal to the Father (*John* x. 30.), and that there were in Christ two wills, the human and the divine. His humanity filled Him with a natural terror of His sufferings, but His divinity was perfectly united with the will of His Heavenly Father, and could pray: Not my will, but thine be done.

ASPIRATION. O God, our Heavenly Father, who hast given us, Thy lost people, this night in the form of a child from the immaculate womb of Mary, Thine only begotten Son as our mediator and joygiver, we give Thee thanks with heart and lips, and humbly beseech Thee that Thou wilt never permit us to forget such a grace, and that we may sustain ourselves by it in all temptations; that we may be ever grateful to Thee for it, and until death praise, honor, and serve Thee in sanctity. Amen.

Whence comes the custom of putting cribs in our Churches and houses at this time?

This custom originated with St. Francis of Assisi who especially loved and contemplated the poor, newborn child Jesus, and

further to increase his love, was accustomed to represent to himself in this way the stable and manger at Bethlehem; and as this pious practice is calculated to assist exceedingly in the instruction of the unlearned, especially of children, it was introduced into many Churches.

THE SOCIETY OF THE HOLY CHILDHOOD FOR THE SALVATION OF THE HEATHEN CHILDREN.

MAny thousands of the heathen children die every year without baptism, and what is most terrible, a great number of these unfortunate children die the most miserable death, and thus perish, soul and body. In the heathen countries, especially in China, a country that contains more than three hundred millions of inhabitants, it is the horrible custom for parents, when they have too many children, or when sickly, weak, or deformed children are born to them, exposing them on the streets, or throwing them with a weight around the neck into the water. On the streets the poor little worms die of hunger, or are eaten up by the dogs and pigs, in the water their flesh becomes the food of the fishes. Many, especially girls, are picked up by the wicked heathens, carried home, and so trained that when they grow up, they may serve vice for money. A multitude of others are strangled immediately after birth, their bodies thrown into the water, or into the dirt. No law forbids this horrible custom, no law punishes it. Often from twenty to thirty thousand of these unfortunate children are killed in one year. The missionaries, who preach the gospel to this heathenland, seeking to win them to Christ, see with terror this cruelty, without being able to prevent it. It especially grieves them, to see these little ones die without baptism. Some of these missionaries wished to take those left on the streets, to baptize, and to educate them; to find women who would privately baptize them, and bring them in from the street. But how provide for these children, how educate them? how support the women who gathered up the children? Money was necessary, but they were poor, and had none. They turned therefore to Christian Europe, and in touching letters begged alms for these little unfortunates. Moved by their misfortunes, the pious Bishop Forbin-Janson of Nancy in France instituted the Society of the Holy Childhood of Jesus, inviting all the children of his diocese to form themselves into a society in the name of the child Jesus, and under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin, for the benefit of the miserable heathen children, giving alms out of love for the child Jesus. All children under twenty one years of age were to belong to it, forming clubs of twelve among themselves, in honor of the twelve years of Christ's childhood; each child to give one kreutzer (about one cent. Tr.) to the society's treasury, one a month, and to say one

"Hail Mary" every day with the invocation: "Holy Mary, pray for us and for the poor children of the heathens". By means of the money thus collected, the missionaries who saved the heathen children from spiritual and temporal death, were to be supported. The society has been in existence since 1841, and has already embraced all Catholic countries; thousands of pious Christian children give the alms from their own hands to do a good work by it for the love of the child Jesus and the salvation of the children of the heathen. Adults are admitted as honorary members, and would it not be well, beloved reader, if you were to join it, and by prayers and alms aid in saving those little ones? This would be indeed a good work, for which rich reward would be given in heaven.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS.

INTROIT. While all things were in quiet silence, and the night was in the midst of her course, thy almighty Word leapt down from heaven, from thy royal throne (*Wis.* xviii. 14. 15.). The Lord hath reigned; he is clothed with beauty; the Lord is clothed with strength, and hath girded himself (*Ps.* xcii. 1.). Glory be to the Father &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Almighty and eternal God, govern all our actions according to Thy pleasure, that all we do, we may do in the name of Thy beloved Son, and thus bear rich fruit in good works. This grant through the same Christ our Lord, &c.

EPISTLE. (*Galat.* iv. 1—7.) BRETHREN! As long as the heir is a child, he differeth nothing from a servant, though he be Lord of all: but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed by the father: so we also when we were children, were serving under the elements of this world. But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law; that he might redeem them who were under the law; that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because you are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying: Abba, Father! Therefore now he is not a servant, but a son. And if a son, an heir also through God.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul desired to instruct the Galatians, many of whom still clung to the Mosaic law, that this was no longer necessary, because Christ had freed them from its hard bondage, which contained merely the rudiments, so to speak, of the one only saving faith, and had made them children and heirs of God, at which they should rejoice and congratulate each other.

Ours is an even much greater happiness than the Jews received, because we, through our ancestors, were converted by apostolic messengers of the faith from heathenism to the true, saving Catholic faith, and by this holy religion were changed from vassals of Satan, into children and heirs of God. What a great advantage is this! Must it not be dearer to us than all the kingdoms of the world? Let us thank the Lord for it, and be careful not to lose this prerogative of being a child of God, and heir of heaven, not by sin to give ourselves anew, as voluntary slaves of Satan.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* ii. 33—40.) At that time: Joseph, and Mary his mother, were wondering at those things which were spoken concerning him. And Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary his mother: Behold, this child is set for the fall, and for the resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted: and thy own soul a sword shall pierce, that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed. And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asar; she was far advanced in years, and had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity. And she was a widow until fourscore and four years; who departed not from the temple, by fastings and prayers serving day and night. Now she at the same hour coming in, confessed to the Lord; and spoke of him to all that looked for the redemption of Israel. And after they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee to their city Nazareth; and the child grew and waxed strong, full of wisdom, and the grace of God was in him.

Why did Mary and Joseph wonder at the things which were spoken of the child Jesus?

They wondered, not because that which was said of the child Jesus by Simeon, was new to them, for they already knew, why He was sent from God, but because of the marvellous ways in

which God revealed the mysteries of the newborn Saviour to Simeon, the shepherds, and to other pious people.

How is Christ set for the fall of many?

Christ is set for the fall, that is, for the eternal damnation, of all those who have heard His doctrine, but have not received it, and those who have received it, but have not lived in accordance with it. Christ is not the cause of their fall, but they themselves are the cause, on account of their hard-heartedness and voluntary obduracy. These would not have committed this great sin, if Christ had not come, preached, and offered them the grace of knowledge and of conversion. (*John* xii. 22.)

For whom is Christ the resurrection?

For those who receive faith in Him, and in His doctrines, and live in accordance with it: these if they persevere, will rise in the future into eternal life.

Why is Christ a sign that shall be contradicted?

Because, by His unexampled birth from a virgin, by His life and death, and especially by His heavenly doctrine, which is entirely opposed to the carnal spirit of this world, Christ became an object of mockery and blasphemy. Even now, according to the saying of St. Bernard, Christ is such a sign of contradiction for many Christians who by their pride constantly contradict His humility, by their avarice His poverty, by their gluttony His fasting, by their impurity His purity, by their indolence His zeal, &c.; denying by their actions that which they profess with their lips, thus publicly showing that they are Christians but in name, of whom it is written: Thou hast the name of being alive, but thou art dead. (*Apoc.* iii. 1.)

What is meant by: And thy own soul a sword shall pierce?

It means that the greatest grief should cut like a sword through the inmost parts of the soul, which came to pass, when Mary heard the calumnies and blasphemies of the Jews against her Son, and when she saw Him die on the cross between two thieves. Meditating on this grief of the most loving mother Mary, St. Bonaventura exclaims: "Never was there grief so great, for never was there Son so loved!"

What else do we learn from this gospel?

The widows should learn from Anna, who spent nearly all her life in the temple, to serve God by prayer and fasting; for a widow who prays not, but lives in pleasures, is dead, while she is living. (i. *Tim.* v. 6.) Parents should learn from it, to be careful, not only that their children increase in growth and in knowledge, but much more that by a pious life they advance in grace before God and man.

ASPIRATION. O Jesus, Thou newborn Saviour, do Thou move our hearts to the fulfilment of Thy precepts that Thou mayst never be set for our fall; for it would be much better for us, not to have known the ways of righteousness, than having known them, to have departed from them.

INSTRUCTION CONCERNING BLESSINGS.

And he blessed them. (*Luke* ii. 34.)

What is meant by "blessing"?

A Blessing on the part of God, means the giving to man some corporal or spiritual grace; a blessing on the part of an angel or a man, means the expression in prayer of a wish or desire that God would give to some particular person a corporal or spiritual grace. In the proper sense of the word, only God can

give a blessing, because all good of the body and soul comes from Him; angels and men can only wish and ask of God, that He would give His gifts.

Have we examples of this in the Bible?

Yes, for the angels blessed Jacob (*Gen.* xxxii. 26.), and Jacob blessed his grandson (*Gen.* xlviii. 15.), Melchisedech blessed Abraham (*Gen.* xxiv. 60.), and Rebecca was blessed by her brothers. (*Gen.* xxvii. 27. xlix.)

Is it well for parents to bless their children?

Yes, for God sometimes fulfils the blessings wished by the parents, as in the case of Jsaac who blessed Jacob, and Jacob who blessed his own sons (*Gen.* xlix.). And, on the contrary, God lets the curses of parents upon their children be fulfilled, as history shows. "The father's blessing establisheth the houses of the children; but the mother's curse rooteth up the foundation". (*Eccl.* iii. 11.)

What power has the priest's blessing?

A very great one, because it is given by the priest, the vicar of Christ on earth, in the name of Jesus, and of the Church founded by Him, in which He has deposited the plenitude of His blessings. The Church expresses this, when the bishop, anointing the hands of the newly ordained, makes the sign of the cross over them: "All that they bless, is blessed; that they consecrate, is consecrated and sanctified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ". The blessing of the priest is to be prized therefore, and a hinderance not set to it by a sinful life. The parents should let their children be blessed by them, when they come to them, as the children were brought to Christ that He might lay His hands on them and bless them. (*Matt.* xix. 13.) [See the instruction in regard to benedictions, sixth Sunday after Pentecost.]

What effects has the blessing of God?

In spiritual life it gives great joy and strength to do right, and avoid evil; and in physical life it gives fruitful prosperity in our business and undertakings. Therefore, all is in the blessing of God, and he who possesses it, is richer than though he possessed the whole world. So one should endeavor by a pious life to secure this blessing, for it rests only on the head of the just. (*Prov.* x. 6.)

INSTRUCTION FOR NEW YEAR'S DAY.

Why is this day so called?

BEcause the secular year begins with this day, as the ecclesiastical year begins with the first Sunday in Advent.

What should be performed on this day?

An offering of the new year should be made to God, asking for His grace that it may be commenced and spent in a holy manner, for the welfare of the soul.

Why do we wish each other a "happy new year"?

Because to wish well to each other, is an act of Christian love; but this wish should come from the heart and not merely from worldly politeness, or we would be like the heathens (*Matt.* v. 47.), and receive no other reward than they.

What festival of the Church is celebrated to-day?

The festival of the Circumcision of our Lord, who, for love of us, voluntarily subjected Himself to the painful law of the Old Covenant, that we might be freed from it.

What was the Circumcision?

It was an external sign of the Old Law, by which the people of that day were numbered among the chosen people of God, as now they become, by baptism, members of the Church of Christ.

What is the signification of Circumcision in the moral or spiritual sense?

Its signification is the mortification of the senses, of evil desires, and inclinations. This is even now practised by Christians, because they promise it in baptism which would be useless without it; just as little as the Jew is a true Jew by the Circumcision only, so little is the baptized a true Christian without a virtuous life. Beg of Christ, therefore, to-day, to give you the grace to work out the spiritual Circumcision.

PRAYER.

I thank Thee, O Lord Jesus, because to-day Thou hast willed to shed Thy blood for me in the Circumcision for the first time, and beg Thee, for the sake of that shedding of Thy blood, to grant that, for the love of Thee, I may circumcise and mortify my eyes, ears, mouth, and hands, and all sensual desires, that I may not look, listen, speak, touch, desire, or do anything wrong. Amen.

[The Introit of the Mass is the same that is said in the third Mass on Christmas.]

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who by means of the fruitful virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, hast given eternal salvation to the world, grant, we beseech Thee, that we may experience her powerful intercession, through whom we were made worthy to receive the Author of Life, Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who livest and reignest, &c.

[The Epistle is the same that is said in the first Mass on Christmas.]

GOSPEL. (*Luke* ii. 21.) And after eight days were accomplished that the child should be circumcised, his name was called Jesus, which was called by the angel, before he was conceived in the womb.

Why did Jesus submit to be circumcised?

That He might show His great love for us, which caused Him, even at the very beginning of His life, to shed His blood for us, to wash us by it from all our sins; and to teach us obedience to the commandments of God and His Church, by voluntarily subjecting Himself, although He was not in the least bound by it to the Jewish law, which ordered that every male-child should be circumcised on the eighth day after its birth. (*Lev.* xii. 3.)

Why was He named Jesus?

Because Jesus means the same as Redeemer and Saviour, and He had come to redeem and save the world (*Matt.* i. 21.), and this is the holiest, most venerable, and most powerful name, by which we can be saved.

What power has this name?

The greatest power, for it repels all attacks of the wicked enemy, as Jesus Himself says (*Mark* xvi. 17.). And so great is the efficacy of this most holy name that even those who are not righteous, can drive out devils by using it (*Matt.* vii. 22.). It has power to cure physical pains and evils, as when used by the apostles (*Acts* iii. 3—7.), and as Christ promised, could be done by all the faithful (*Mark.* xvi. 17.). St. Bernard calls the name of Jesus a "Medicine"; and St. Chrysostom says, "This name cures all ills; it gives succor in all the ailments of the soul, in temptations, in faint-heartedness, in sorrow, and in all evil desires, &c." "Let him who cannot excite contrition in his heart for the sins he has committed, think of the loving, meek, and suffering Jesus, invoke His holy name with fervor and confidence, and he will feel his heart touched and made better", says St. Laurent Justinianus. It overcomes and dispels the temptations of the enemy: "When we fight against Satan in the name of Jesus", says the martyr St. Justin, "Jesus fights for us, in us, and with us, and the enemies must fly as soon as they hear the name of Jesus". It prepares and secures us help and blessings in all corporal and spiritual necessities, because nothing is impossible to him who asks in the name of Jesus, and whatever tends to his salvation, will be given him (*John* xiv. 13.). Therefore it is useful above all things, to invoke this holy name in all dangers of body and soul, in doubtful thoughts, in great temptations, especially in temptations against holy chastity, and still more so when one has fallen into sin, from which he desires to be delivered; for this name is like oil (*Cant.* i. 2.) which cures, which nourishes, and which illumines.

How must this name be pronounced to experience its power?

With lively faith, with steadfast, unshaken confidence, with deepest reverence and devotion, for in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. (*Philipp.* ii. 10.) What

wickedness, then, is theirs who habitually pronounce this name carelessly and irreverently, upon every occasion! Such a habit is certainly an abortion of hell; for what the damned and the devils are eternally doing, he imitates who abuses this name.

Why does this name so seldom manifest its power in our days?

Because Christian faith is becoming ever weaker, confidence less, while complete submission to the will of God is wanting. As faith grows more vivid among people, confidence stronger, and submission to God more sincere, so will the power of this most sacred name manifest itself in more wonderful and consoling aspects.

PRAYER TO JESUS IN DIFFERENT DIFFICULTIES.

O Jesus! Thou Consolation of the afflicted! Thy name is indeed diffused like oil; for Thou dost illumine those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death; Thou dost disperse the blindness of the soul and dost cure its ills; Thou givest food and drink to those who hunger and thirst after justice. Be also, O Jesus! my Saviour, the physician of my soul, the healer of its wounds. O Jesus! Succor of those who are in need, be my protector in temptations! O Jesus! Father of the poor, do Thou nourish me! O Jesus! Joy of the angels, do Thou comfort me! O Jesus! my only hope and refuge, be my helper in the hour of death, for there is given us no other name beneath the sun by which we may be saved, but Thy most blessed name Jesus!

EXHORTATION. St. Paul says: "All whatsoever you do in word or in work, all things do ye in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ". (*Colos.* iii. 17.). We should, therefore, follow the example of the saints, and continually say, or, at least, think: "For love of Thee, O Jesus, I rise; for love of Thee I lie down; for love of Thee I eat, drink, and enjoy myself; for love of Thee I work, speak, or am silent". In this way we will accustom ourselves to do all in the name of Jesus, by which we will obtain that all will pass easily, or at least meritoriously.

PRAYER FOR NEW YEAR'S DAY.

O God, Heavenly Father, Father of Mercy, God of all Consolation! we thank Thee that from our birth to this day, Thou hast so well preserved us, and hast protected us in so many dangers; we beseech Thee, through the merits of Thy beloved Son, and by His sacred blood which He shed for us on this day in His circumcision, to forgive us all the sins which, during the past year, we have committed against

Thy commandments, by which we have aroused Thy indignation and wrath against ourselves. Preserve us in the coming year and always from all sins, and from all misfortunes of body and soul. Grant that from this day to the end of our life, all our senses, thoughts, words, and works, which we here dedicate to Thee for all time, may be directed in accordance with Thy will, and we may finally die in the true Catholic faith, and enjoy with Thee in Thy kingdom a joyful new year, that shall know no end. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE SUNDAY FOLLOWING NEW YEAR'S DAY.

[The Introit, the Prayer of the Church, and the Epistle, are the same that are said on the Sunday after Christmas.]

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* ii. 19—23.) But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in sleep to Joseph in Egypt, saying: Arise, and take the child and his mother, and go into the Land of Israel. For they are dead that sought the life of the child. Who arose, and took the child and his mother, and came into the Land of Israel. But hearing that Archelaus reigned in Judea in the room of Herod, his father, he was afraid to go thither: and being warned in sleep, retired into the quarters of Galilee. And coming, he dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was said by the prophets: that he shall be called a Nazarite.

INSTRUCTION. In this we see how wonderfully God deals with His own. He indeed permits them to be persecuted and oppressed, but never to be suppressed, and in longer or shorter times He gives them many consolations. Jesus was forced to fly into Egypt to escape the persecution of Herod, because God did not desire to save Him by a visible miracle, but in the natural manner. He lives in misery in Egypt, but for no longer time than God wills, who having put His enemies to shame, and taken them out of His way, calls Him back and leaves Him to pass His youth in quietness and peace. The conduct of God to His Son, and the care He has for Him, should be a consolation for the just; they must be happy if God deals with them as with Him; they

will certainly, like Christ, be made to suffer no more than God permits, and their sufferings will be ever accompanied by consolations, and the misery last but a short time. St. Joseph avoided the Land of Judea, because he feared that Archelaus would succeed to Herod's cruelty, as he had to his government. A Nazarite means, a low person, a despised person. Jesus was so called, because He grew up at Nazareth, and spent the greater part of His life in this city, which was held in such contempt by the Jews that they could not believe, any thing good could come out of Nazareth. (*John* 1. 46.)

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FESTIVAL OF THE EPIPHANY.

What is this festival?

His festival is set apart for the solemn commemoration of the coming of the three wise men, kings, from the East, guided by a miraculous star which God has caused to appear to them, to Bethlehem, where they found Christ in the stable, adored, honored, and offered gifts to Him.

Why is this day called Epiphania Domini, or Apparition of the Lord?

Because the Church wishes to present the three important times in the life of Christ, when He made His divinity known to man: the coming of the wise men from the East, to whom He revealed Himself as the Son of God to the gentiles; His baptism in the Jordan, when He revealed Himself to the Jews, and His first miracle at the marriage in Cana, by which He revealed Himself to His disciples.

In joy the Church sings to-day in the Introit of the Mass: Behold, the sovereign comes, the Lord, and in his hand is the kingdom, power, and sovereignty. Give to the king thy judgment, O God, and to the king's son thy justice. (*Ps.* lxxi. 1.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who on this day didst reveal Thyself to the gentiles, led by a star to Thee, mercifully grant, that we who know Thee now by faith, may be led to behold Thy glory face to face. Through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, &c.

LESSON. (*Isaias* lx. 1—6.) Arise, be enlightened, O Jerusalem, for thy light is come, and the glory of thy Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and a mist the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the gentiles shall walk in thy light, and kings in the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thy eyes round about, and see: all these are gathered together, they are come to thee, thy sons shall come from afar, and thy daughters shall rise up at thy side. Then shalt thou see and abound, and thy heart shall wonder and be enlarged, when the multitude of the sea shall be

converted to thee, the strength of the gentiles shall come to thee. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Madian and Epha: all they from Saba shall come, bringing gold and frankincense, and shewing forth praise to the Lord.

EXPLANATION. The Prophet Isaias in this epistle predicts that the light of the Lord, which is Christ, will rise over Jerusalem, the prototype of the Church, and that the gentiles who knew nothing of the true God, would come to walk in that light which Christ, by His doctrine and holy life, would cause to shine, and that numberless nations, from all parts of the world, would assemble as her children to adore the one true God. The fulfilment of this prophecy commenced with the adoration of the magi, who are to be regarded as the first Christian converts from the gentiles; the Church, therefore, very properly celebrates this day with great solemnity. We ought also to share in the joy of the Church, because our ancestors were gentiles, and like the three wise men were called to the true faith. Let us exclaim with Isaias: Give praise, O ye heavens, and rejoice, O earth: ye mountains give praise, with jubilation: because the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy on his poor ones. (*Isai.* xlix. 13.)

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* ii. 1—12.) When Jesus therefore was born in Bethlehem of Juda, in the days of King Herod, behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying: Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to adore him. And King Herod hearing this, was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And assembling together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where Christ should be born. But they said to him: In Bethlehem of Juda. For so it is written by the prophet: And thou Bethlehem the Land of Juda art not the least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come forth the captain that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod privately calling the wise men, learned diligently of them the time of the star which appeared to them: and sending them into Bethlehem, said: Go and diligently inquire after the child; and when you have found him, bring me word again, that I also may come and adore him. Who hav-

ing heard the king, went their way; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East, went before them, until it came and stood over where the child was. And seeing the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And entering into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and falling down they adored him: and opening their treasures, they offered him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having received an answer in sleep that they should not return to Herod, they went back another way into their own country.

What caused the three kings to undertake so severe a journey?

A star which God permitted to appear in their land, at the sight of which they were inwardly enlightened, so that they at once recognized its signification. Let us learn from these kings who so readily responded to the inspiration of God, by immediately undertaking so difficult a journey, also to respond at once to the inspirations of God, and seek the Saviour without delay; and from their zeal, and the fearlessness with which they asked of Herod where the Messiah would be found, we should learn to seek and practise, without fear of men, whatever is necessary for our salvation.

Why did Herod fear, and all Jerusalem with him?

Because Herod, a proud, imperious, cruel, and therefore suspicious king, was afraid, when he heard of a new-born king, that he would be driven from the throne, and brought to punishment for his vices. A bad conscience is always ill at ease, and never at rest. There is no peace for the wicked, saith the Lord God. (*Isai.* lvii. 21.) Jerusalem, that is, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, feared because many of them were attached to Herod, and others, especially the chief priests and the scribes, because they feared they would be punished for their secret crimes, when the Messiah would come, of whom they knew that He would judge the poor with justice, and with the breath of his mouth (would) slay the wicked. (*Isai.* xi. 4.)

Why did Herod call together the chief priests and the scribes?

Partly to find from them where the Messiah was to be born, partly and principally because God so directed it, that Herod and the chief priests, knowing the time and place of the Messiah's birth, would have no excuse for their infidelity. In the same way God often gives us the plainest understanding of the most wholesome truths, which we follow as little as the Jews who had sufficient knowledge of the Messiah, indeed, even showed the way to the three kings, but made no use of it for themselves, and were therefore cast away.

Why did Herod say, he wished to adore the child?

This he did out of wicked hypocrisy and cunning. He had no other intention than that of putting Jesus to death, and therefore affected piety to find out exactly the time and place of His birth. Thus do those soul-murderers who desire the fall of an innocent person; they dare not show themselves as wolves, that is, they dare not, at once, let their evil intentions be suspected, and so they put on sheep's clothing, feign piety and devotion, until they creep into the heart from which, by flattery, and irony about religion and virtue, and by presents, they have expelled the sense of shame, and the fear of God, and then they murder the soul.

Why did the kings adore Christ kneeling?

Because by the light received from God, they saw God Himself in the little child in the stable at Bethlehem, although they saw nothing glorious, nothing but poverty surrounding the child Jesus and His virgin mother. How do these gentile kings shame those lukewarm Catholics, who conduct themselves with such irreverence towards their God, present in the Blessed Sacrament, not even bending their knees before Him!

Why did the kings offer gold, frankincense, and myrrh?

Because it was the ancient Eastern custom, never to appear without presents before a prince or king, the three kings, as the holy fathers universally teach, enlightened by the Holy Ghost, desired by their presents to honor Christ as God, king, and as man. Of this the venerable Beda writes: "The first of the kings, named Melchior, offered gold to Christ the Lord and king; the second, named Kaspar, frankincense to the divinity of Christ; and the third, Balthasar, myrrh, by which was expressed that Christ, the Son of man, must die."

How can we bring similar offerings to Christ?

We offer gold to Him, when we love Him from our whole heart, and out of love for Him, present Him our will, which is our most precious treasure, by perfect obedience and continual selfdenial, at the same time assisting the poor with alms in His name. Frankincense we burn for Him, when we devoutly and ardently pray to Him, especially when we meditate upon His omnipotence, love, goodness, justice, and mercy. We offer Him myrrh, when we avoid carnal desires, mortify our evil inclinations and passions, even though it be as bitter as the fruit of myrrh to do so, and strive for purity of body and soul.

Why did the kings return by another way to their own country?

This they did by command of God, who revealed to them in a dream the evil intentions of Herod, and thus they did not act as this malicious man desired. From this we should learn to obey God rather than man, that we must be obedient to His directions, even if we do not understand them; so the three kings obeyed, although they could not see, as they had just adored His only begotten Son as almighty God and king, how God could command them to fly from Herod; and we, after we are once converted, must take a very different way from that we walked before. "Our fatherland is paradise, heaven," writes St. Gregory. "We have departed from it by pride, disobedience, abuse of visible things, therefore it is needed that we return to it by obedience, contempt of the world, by taming the desires of the flesh. We return to our own country by another road. By forbidden joys have we left the joys of paradise, by the pains of penance we return to it."

ASPIRATION. Give me, O divine Saviour, the faith of those Eastern kings. Enlighten my understanding with the light which enlightened theirs, and move my heart, so that I may in future follow this light, and sincerely seek Thee who hast first sought me. Grant, also, that I may really find Thee, with the wise men may adore Thee in spirit and in truth, and bring to Thee the gold of love, the frankincense of prayer, and the myrrh of penance and mortification, that, having here offered Thee the sacrifice of my faith, I may adore Thee in glory. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

N the Introit of this Mass the Church exhorts us in these words to a joyous adoration of Christ: I saw on an elevated throne a man sitting, whom a multitude of angels adored, singing together: Behold Him, the name of whose glory is eternal (*Dan.* 7.) Sing joyfully to God, all the earth; serve ye the Lord with gladness. (*Ps.* xcix. 2.) Glory be to te Father, &c. Thus in the Mass all seeks to fill us with joyful obedience to God and His holy commandments.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O Lord, let the desires of Thy suppliant people be pleasing to Thee, and by Thy heavenly goodness effect that they may plainly see what they should do, and have strength to perform that which they see. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

EPISTLE. (*Romans* xii. 1—5.) BRETHREN: I beseech you, therefore, by the mercy of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing unto God, your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be reformed in the newness of your mind, that you may prove what is the good, and the acceptable, and perfect will of God. For I say, by the grace that is given me, to all that are among you, not to be more wise than it behooveth to be wise, but to be wise unto sobriety, and according as God hath divided

to every one the measure of faith. For as in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members of one another.

EXPLANATION. The apostle entreats, even conjures us by all the mercies which God has shown us, to bring Him a living sacrifice, that is, one dead to the carnal desires, but alive to all virtue; a holy, that is, pure, immaculate; God pleasing, that is, a sacrifice intended for His glory only; not a dead sacrifice as the Jews offered by killing animals, nor, as the gentiles by polluting their bodies, an unholy one. This living, holy, God pleasing sacrifice, we should offer in our body; but this does not exclude the sacrifice of our spirit, because all our actions, the corporal as well as spiritual, should be directed to God, the end for which we were created. We should in body as well as in spirit, offer God a living, holy sacrifice, which we do, when all our works are performed solely in His honor, and so are sanctified; when we mortify our carnal desires, for example: our eating and drinking, and all impure desires; subdue our five senses: the sense of sight, of hearing, of speaking, &c.; if we overcome the spirit of pride, anger, impatience, and not suffer ourselves to be distracted during prayer, Church service, and have before God, as had David, a contrite heart, which is the most pleasing sacrifice in His eyes, and which He never despises. In this way we render a reasonable service, and are, as St. Peter says (i. *Peter* 2. 9.), a kingly priesthood, because we govern like kings over our evil inclinations, and offer with body and soul a continual sacrifice to God. The apostle further exhorts us not to become like the world, that is, that we do not follow the corrupt manners and principles of the evil children of the world; not to desire those things at which the world aims: not to love that which the world loves; not to act as the world acts; but rather constantly seek to change our entire disposition, and make it anew by combatting our corrupted, evil inclinations, and replacing them with the opposite ones. We must cease to be the old worldly man, and become a new heavenly man, whose life is in heaven; and to be such, we must carefully seek to know in all things what is pleasing to God, and therefore perfect and good. This is the necessary science to which St. Paul alludes, when he says, We should not wish to know more than is proper. All the arts and sciences will not help us to gain heaven, if we do not strive to learn thoroughly what faith teaches, and to know what God demands; and having even progressed far in this God pleasing science, we should not boldly think more of ourselves than is right, and not violate charity by contempt of others less instructed; for God gives to every one, in some measure, the gift of faith. This gift of faith we should use in order

to more and more glorify the body of Christ, His Church, whose members we are, and to increase the number of her members.

ASPIRATION. Grant, O Jesus, that by mortification, humility, and contrition, I may offer my body and my soul as a living, holy, and pleasing sacrifice to Thee, and that I may never defile them by impurities.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* ii. 42—52.) And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast; and having fulfilled the days when they returned, the child Jesus remained in Jerusalem, and his parents knew it not. And thinking he was in the company,

they came a day's journey, and sought him among their kinsfolks and acquaintance. And not finding him, they returned into Jerusalem, seeking him. And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him, were astonished at his wisdom and his answers. And seeing him, they wondered. And his mother said to him: Son, why hast thou done so to us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said to them: How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be about my father's business? And they understood not the word that he spoke unto them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them. And his mother kept all these words in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom, and age, and grace with God and man.

Why did our Saviour go with His parents to Jerusalem to the temple?

Because God Himself by Moses (*Deut.* xvi. 16.) commanded that all the male Israelites should appear, three times a year on certain festivals, and offer sacrifice before Him in the temple; Jesus fulfilled this commandment to set us an example that we, according to the will of the holy Catholic Church, should willingly and devoutly be present at the services of the Church on Sundays and holidays of obligation, and not be kept away by bad weather, bad roads, or by other trivial excuses, when Jesus did not shun a three day's journey to the temple.

Why does the gospel say "as usual"?

That we may understand that, like Mary and Joseph, we should keep the ecclesiastical festivals and usages exactly, and how proper it is that true Catholics should live by them. As Mary and Joseph took the child Jesus with them, parents should learn to require of their children, at an early age, to take part in prayer, attend school and Church, and see that they conduct themselves quietly and reverently while there.

Why did the child Jesus remain in Jerusalem?

Because of His love of prayer and communion with His Heavenly Father, and to show even then some rays of His divinity, by which to let it be known that He had come for the glory of His Father, and to procure our salvation. This should be our chief object, also.

Why did Mary and Joseph so diligently search for Jesus?

Because they were fearful that they would lose Jesus, whom they loved so unspeakably. We should learn from this, how careful we should be, not to lose Jesus by sin, or having lost Him, how anxiously we should seek by penance to find Him again. By the search and inquiries of the parents of Jesus, those parents are taught and made ashamed who care less for the education of their children than for their temporal advantages, and pay no attention whether they are in good or in bad company, whether they are learning things that are useful or not, indeed, for the sake of some temporal advantage, for example, or for support, even permit their children sinful intimacy with evil minded persons. From these parents God, one day, with sternest justice, will demand the souls of their children.

Why was our Saviour found in the temple with the doctors, listening to them, and asking them questions?

That we might be shown that we ought to seek the knowledge necessary for our salvation, and so attend carefully to the sermons and instructions on Christian doctrine; we should by no means be ashamed to ask questions of our pastors, when we are in doubt, and should listen to their answers. Was Christ, the Eternal Wisdom, ashamed to ask questions and to answer? Why should we ignorant people hesitate to do it? It is much to be regretted that persons who have many important things concerning their spiritual welfare on their minds, from pride and false shame, would rather go to perdition than ask advice, solely for fear of showing their ignorance.

Why did Mary say: Son, why hast thou done so to us?

Those words were forced from her by pain at the absence of her Son, whom she loved above all things, and not by indignation, for He was blameless. But Mary's conduct should teach parents to remember their duty to care for their children, and punish them when they do wrong.

MORAL INSTRUCTION ON THE VIRTUE OF OBEDIENCE.

He was subject to them. (*Luke* ii. 51.)

From this all Christians should learn to be obedient to the commandments of God, of the Church, and of their parents. God with obedience or disobedience to His commandments, has united life or death, blessing or curses, and shows in the Bible (i. *Kings* xv. 22.), that obedience pleases Him more than sacrifices or the fat of rams; that He despises disobedience as He does witchcraft and idolatry. We must be obedient to the Church, because Christ Himself with His holy Spirit lives in her, and governs her, and has said: Who hears not the Church, let

him be to thee a heathen and a publican, therefore, shut out from eternal life. We must be obedient to our parents, because they stand to us in place of God, and we owe to them, under Him, our life and many benefits. Those children have reason to be afraid who do not assist their parents, when they are old, poor, and helpless, are even ashamed of them, since even Christ Jesus, the God-Man, was obedient and subject in all things to His poor mother, and to an humble mechanic who was only His fosterfather. Cursed be he who honoureth not his father and mother (*Deut.* xxvii. 16.); how much more cursed those who despise, deride, and abandon their parents? Their eyes will one day be picked out by ravens (*Prov.* xxx. 17.). And if God commanded obstinate and disobedient children to be stoned (*Deut.* xxi. 20.), what do those not deserve who even strike their parents, or otherwise lay hands upon them?

How did Jesus increase in age, wisdom, and grace?

As He increased in age, He showed new effects of the wisdom and grace with which He was filled, and so teaches us to advance farther and farther in the path of virtue, for each age has its peculiar virtues and duties, which we should strive to fulfil, that we may attain to the perfection of the next.

ASPIRATION. Most amiable Jesus! who in the twelfth year of Thy age, didst permit Thyself to be found in the temple by Thy parents, and, as an example for us, wast humbly obedient to them, grant that we may diligently serve the important affair of our salvation, willingly carry the yoke of Thy law from our youth, and be always obedient to the laws of Thy Church, to our parents, and superiors. Prevent uneducated youth from growing up recklessly and impertinently to a scandalous life. Give parents wisdom and grace to educate their children according to Thy will in all virtue. Grant to us all, that we may never lose Thee by sin, or if we have lost Thee, to anxiously seek Thee, happily find Thee, and with Thy grace more and more increase in wisdom and in virtue. Amen.

TRUE PIETY.

They found Him in the temple. (*Luke* ii. 6. 4.)

VEry many people deceive themselves in regard to true piety, because their imagination represents it to them, according to the effect produced by their passions or disposition of mind. He who fasts willingly, believes, if he only fasts often, that he is pious, though in his heart he nourishes a secret hatred, and

while he fears to wet the tip of his tongue with wine, even with water, lest he should not live temperately enough, yet finds pleasure in detraction and slander, that unquenchable thirst for the blood of his neighbor. Another, because he is accustomed daily to recite a long string of prayers, esteems himself pious, though he overflows afterwards with haughty, bitter, offensive language, hurting people at home and abroad. One keeps his purse open for the poor, but keeps his heart ever closed to the love of his enemy, whom he will not forgive; another forgives his enemy with all his heart, but will not pay his creditors, until forced by law to do so. All these think themselves pious, and are perhaps so regarded by the world, but in truth they are anything rather than pious. Then, in what does true piety consist? It consists in the perfect love of God, or to speak more accurately, it is the perfect love of God itself. This love is called the beautiful love, because it is the adornment of the soul, and attracts to itself with complacency the eyes of the Divine Majesty. When it strengthens us to do good, it is called the strong love; when it causes us to do that good quickly, carefully, and repeatedly, it is called piety. The ostrich has wings, it is true, but never uses them for flying; the chickens fly heavily and not high; but the eagles, the doves, and the swallows, fly high and swiftly, and do not easily tire. The sinners are but earth people, they creep upon the ground; the just, who are still imperfect, rise, it is true, towards heaven, but seldom, and then but slowly and heavily. But some there are, true, pious souls, who like the doves and the eagles soar high on strong, swift wings to God. In a word, piety is nothing else than a certain active, swift energy of the spirit, with which the strong love in us, or we with it, perform, as far as it is possible to us, all good. As the strong love urges us to keep God's commandments, the perfect love, that is, piety, urges us to keep them carefully and with all possible zeal. No one is just or pious who does not keep all, without exception, of God's commandments; for to be just we must possess the strong love, and to be pious we must possess besides an active, lively attention to all the good that can possibly be done by us. Thus St. Francis de Sales writes in his Philothea, from which it is seen that true piety consists not in special devotions, or the practice of special good works, but in the zealous, earnest, continuous obedience to the commandments, and performance of duty for the love of God.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

N the Introit of this day's Mass the Church calls upon all creatures to thank God for the Incarnation of His only begotten Son. Let all the earth adore Thee, and sing to Thee; let it sing a psalm to Thy name. (*Ps.* lxv. 4.) Shout with joy all the earth, sing ye a psalm to His name, give glory to His praise. (*Ps.* lxv. 1.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Almighty and eternal God! Heaven and earth stand under Thy great direction. Bless our days with Thy peace! Behold Thy people bowed to the dust, awaiting the merciful grant of this petition, through Jesus Christ our Lord, &c.

EPISTLE. (*Romans* xii. 6—16.) Brethren: We have different gifts, according to the grace that is given us: either prophecy, to be used according to the rule of faith, or ministry in ministering, or he that teacheth in doctrine, he that exhorteth in exhorting, he that giveth with simplicity, he that ruleth with carefulness, he that sheweth mercy with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Hating that which is evil, cleaving to that which is good. Loving one another with the charity of brotherhood, with honour preventing one another. In carefulness not slothful. In spirit fervent. Serving the Lord. Rejoicing in hope. Patient in tribulation. Instant in prayer. Communicating to the necessities of the saints. Pursuing hospitality. Bless them that persecute you: bless and curse not. Rejoice with them that rejoice, weep with them that weep. Being of one mind, one towards another. Not minding high things, but consenting to the humble. Be not wise in your own conceits.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul here exhorts every Christian to make good use of God's gifts; if one receives an office, he must see well to it, that he fills it in such a manner that he can, one day, stand before God. He especially exhorts to brotherly love which we should practise by charitable works, such as, receiving strangers hospitably, giving alms to those who are in need, and to those who by misfortune or injustice have lost their pro-

perty; he commands us, at the same time, to joy in the welfare of our neighbor, and to take his misfortunes to heart, as we rejoice at our own good fortune, or are grieved at our misfortune.

How is brotherly love best preserved?

Brotherly love, by which we love our neighbor as our own brother, is especially preserved by the virtue of humility, by which we esteem our neighbor above ourselves, consider his good qualities only, bear his defects patiently, and always meet him in a friendly, respectful, and indulgent manner. This humility thus causes us to live always in peace with our fellowmen, while among the proud, where each wants to be higher than the rest, there is continual strife and dissatisfaction. (*Prov.* xiii. 10.)

MORAL INSTRUCTION FOR SUPERIORS.

THose have to expect a severe sentence from God, who merely for temporal gain, seek profitable offices, and thrust themselves into them, whether fit for them or not; and when capable care very little whether or not they fulfil the duties required by their office, even perhaps making the fulfilment of them depend upon bribes. Of such God makes terrible complaint: Thy princes (judges) are faithless, companions of thieves: they all love bribes, they run after rewards; they judge not for the fatherless; and the widow's cause comes not into them. (*Isai.* i. 23.) But horribly and speedily will God appear to you; for a most severe judgment shall be for them that bear rule. (*Wisd.* vi. 6.)

ASPIRATION. Grant us, O Lord, Thy grace, that, according to Thy will, we may follow the instructions of St. Paul in regard to humility and love, have compassion upon all suffering from need, esteem ourselves as nothing, and descend to the lowest, that we may, one day, be elevated with them in heaven.

GOSPEL. (*John* ii. 1—11.) And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there. And Jesus also was invited with his disciples, to the marriage. And the wine failing, the mother of Jesus saith to him: They have no wine. And Jesus saith to her: Woman, what is it to me and to thee? My hour is not yet come. His mother saith to the waiters: Whatsoever he shall say to you, do ye. Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of the purifying of the Jews,

containing two or three measures apiece. Jesus said to them: Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And Jesus saith: Draw out now, and carry to the chief steward of the feast. And they carried it. And when the chief steward had tasted the water made wine, and knew not whence it was, but the waiters knew who had drawn the water, the chief steward calleth the bridegroom, and saith to him: Every man at first setteth forth good wine, and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse. But thou hast kept the good wine until now. This

beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee: and he manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

Why did Christ go with His mother to this marriage?

That He might honor this humble and God fearing couple who, with faithful hearts had invited Him and His mother to their wedding; that He might give us, by deigning to be present at the marriage of these poor people, an example of humility; that by changing the water into wine, He might come to their assistance in their poverty, and save their good name; to reveal His dignity as the Messiah to His disciples by this miracle; and to sanctify by His presence the marriages that are formed with proper modesty.

Alas! how few marriages of our time could Jesus honor with His presence, because He is invited neither by fervent prayer, nor by the chaste life of the couple: He is excluded, rather, by the frequent immorality of the married couple and their guests.

Why was Mary interested in this newly married couple?

Because she is merciful and the Mother of Mercy, and willingly assists all the poor or afflicted, who fear God. From this incident St. Bonaventura judges of the many graces which we can hope for through Mary (that is, through her intercession. Tr.), now that she reigns in heaven; "for", he says, "if Mary while yet on earth, was so compassionate, how much more so is she now reigning in heaven!" and he gives the reason when adding: "Mary now that she sees the face of God, knows our necessities far better than when she was on earth, and that in proportion to the increase of her compassion, has increased her power to aid us." Ah! why do we not take refuge in all our necessities with this most merciful mother, who, unasked, is so anxious for the wretched?

Why did Christ say to Mary: Woman, what is it to me and to thee?

This seemingly harsh reply of Christ was no reproach, for Mary had made her request only in love and mercy, and Christ praises even those happy ones who are merciful, but He wished to show that in the performance of divine work, only the divine will should have force. He thus meant to say: "In this thou, O mother, art not my mother, because I received from thee my humanity, not my divinity, which alone performs miracles, and this only by the will of my Heavenly Father. In accordance with this will, I will do that which thou dost ask, when the hour designed by God shall come." Though the hour had not come, He yet granted His mother's wish, who knew that her divine Son refused none of her requests, and so she said to the

servants: Whatsoever He shall say to you, do ye. Behold the great power of Mary's intercession! Neglect not therefore to take refuge with this most powerful mother!

What are we taught by the words: My hour has not yet come?

These words teach us, that we should in all things await God's appointed time, and in things belonging to God and His honor, should act only by divine direction, without any human motives.

What does the lack of wine signify?

In the spiritual sense the lack of wine may be understood to signify the lack of love between married people, which happens mostly in the case of those who enter this state with impure motives, for the sake of riches, beauty of person, so, or who have before marriage kept up sinful intercourse. For these it only remains to ask God for forgiveness of their sins, to bear the hardships of married life in the spirit of penance, and to change the wrong motives they had before marriage, so will God supply the lack of wine, that is, the lack of true love, and change the waters of misery into the wine of patient affection.

Why did Christ command them to take the wine to the steward?

That the steward, whose office required him to be attentive to the conduct of the guests, and to know the quality of the wine, should give his judgment in regard to the excellence of this, and be able to testify to the miracle before all the guests.

ASPIRATION. O my most merciful Jesus! I would rather drink in this world the sour wine of misery than the sweet wine of pleasure, that in heaven I may taste the perfect wine of eternal joy.

INSTRUCTION ON THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY.

What is Matrimony?

MAtrimony is the perfect, unlimited union and connection of two free persons of different sex (*Cor.* vii. 3. 4.), that the association between man and woman may be advanced by the hope of mutual assistance, that supported each by the other, they may more easily bear the burdens of life, and the weakness of age; and by the procreation of children they may leave not heirs to temporal estates, but rather to raise preservers of the true faith and religion (*Tob.* vi. 16, 17, 22.); that it may be a means of preventing sins of the flesh. (*Cor.* i. 72., *Cat. rom. de matr.* 313, 14.)

Who instituted Matrimony?

God Himself, the Creator of all things, instituted it, and ordered the manner in which it should be kept (*Gen.* i. 26, 27., and ii. 18, 21—24.). He Himself brought to man the helpmate, whom he had

formed from his side, that she who came from his heart, might never depart from his heart, but cling to him in the indissoluble bond of love. To this original divine institution Christ refers (*Matt.* xix. 4—6.), and the Church declares the bond of marriage perpetual and indissoluble.

Is Matrimony a Sacrament?

Yes; according to the testimony of the fathers, the Church has held it such from the times of the apostles, which she could not do, had Christ not raised it to the dignity of a Sacrament. St. Paul even calls it a great Sacrament, because it is symbolical of the perpetual union of Christ with His Church; and the Council of Trent declares: "If any one says, that Matrimony is not really and truly one of the seven Sacraments of the Church instituted by Christ, but an invention of men, that imparts no grace, let him be anathema." (*Conc. Trid. Sess.* 24. c. 1.)

What graces does this Sacrament impart?

The grace of preserving matrimonial fidelity inviolate; the grace of educating children as Christians; of patiently enduring the unavoidable difficulties of married life, and of living peaceably with each other. For all this married people greatly need the grace of God, and without it they can scarcely fulfil their duties at all, to the great detriment of their own and their children's salvation.

What is the external sign of grace in the Sacrament of Matrimony?

The union of two single persons in Matrimony which, according to the regulations of the Council of Trent (*Conc. Trid. Sess.* 24. c. 1.), must not be formed privately, but publicly in the face of the Church, that is, before the pastor, or, with his permission, by another priest, in the presence of two witnesses.

What preparations are to be made to receive the grace of this Sacrament?

The first and best preparation is a pure and pious life, joined to the invocation of the Holy Ghost that we may know, whether or not we are called to this state of life. Next, the parents and the father-confessor should be asked for advice, and that the choice is not made because of wealth, beauty, or station, but because of true Christian sentiment and education. The third and nearest preparation is, to purify the conscience, if it has not already been done, by a good general confession, and the reception of the most holy Sacrament of the Altar. Before their marriage the young couple should ask their parents' blessing, should hear the marriage Mass with the greatest devotion, with the intention of obtaining God's grace to begin their new state of life well, and finally, they should commend themselves with confidence to the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary and her spouse St. Joseph.

Why are there so many unhappy marriages?

Because so many people prepare the way to marriage by sins and vices, continue to sin without interruption, and without true amendment until marriage; therefore always confess unworthily, even perhaps before the very wedding. Besides this, many enter the married life only on account of carnal intentions, or other earthly motives; often they do not in the least think to ask God for His grace; on their marriage day without any proper preparation for such an important, sacred act, they go to Church even in immorality, and afterwards celebrate their wedding with but little modesty. Is it any wonder, that such married people receive no blessing, no grace, when they render themselves so unworthy, so unfit for it?

Why did God institute married life?

That children might be brought up honestly and as Christians, and that they should be especially educated in matters of faith; that married people should sustain each the other in the difficulties of life, and mutually exhort themselves to a pious life; that the sin of impurity might be avoided. For they who in such manner receive matrimony as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power. (*Tob.* vi. 17.)

With was intentions should the married state be entered?

With such intentions as had the young Tobias and his bride Sara, who before the marriage ceremony, both ardently prayed God for His grace, and took their wedding breakfast in the fear of the Lord (*Tob.* xiv. 15.). Hence God was with them with His blessing until death. If all young couples would so enter the marriage state, it would certainly be holy, God pleasing, and blessed for them, and the words of St. Paul, spoken to wives, would come true for them: Yet she shall be saved by bearing children, if she continue in faith, and love, and sanctification with sobriety. (i. *Tim.* ii. 15.)

Why are those engaged to be married, published three times in Church?

That those things such as affinity, clandestine marriages, or public dishonesty which are impediments to the marriage of the persons, and would render it invalid, may be known in time. Therefore any one who is aware of such impediments, is bound to make them known to the pastor.

Why is the marriage performed in the presence of a priest?

Because the Catholic Church expressly declares, that those marriages which are not performed in presence of a priest, or, with his permission, by another priest, and without witnesses, are null and void (*Sess.* xxiv. c. 1.); and because the blessing of

the priest, which he imparts in the name of the Church, gives the couple, if they are in a state of grace, strength, power and grace to be faithful to each other, to endure all trials patiently, and be safe from all the influences of the evil enemy.

Why do they join hands before the priest and two witnesses?

By this they bind themselves before God and His Church to remain true to each other, and to be ready to assist each other in all adversities, for which reason the priest winds the stole around their hands*), the bridegroom puts a ring on the bride's finger which exhorts her to inviolate fidelity, for which purpose the priest signs and seals this holy union with the unbloody Sacrifice of the New Law.

Can the bond of marriage be dissolved in the Catholic Church?

A valid marriage, contracted with the free consent of each of the parties, can according to the plain doctrine of the holy Scriptures, the constant teaching and practice of the Church, be dissolved only by the death of one of the parties. If the pope or a bishop, for important reasons, gives a divorce, this is only from bed and board, and neither can marry again while the other lives, without committing a grievous sin. (Such a second marriage would not be valid at all. *Trans.*) How pure and holy do the doctrine and practice of the Catholic Church show themselves to be in this, the most important and the most sacred of all human relations, preserving its inviolability and sanctity; while, on the contrary, by means of the wanton doctrine of the heretics, which for trivial reasons entirely dissolves the marriage contract, this sacred union is made the deepest ignominy of mankind, and the playball of human passions and caprice!

What is thought of mixed marriages, or marriages between Catholics and Protestants?

The Catholic Church has always condemned such marriages, because of the great dangers for the Catholic party and for the children, which unavoidably spring from them. Such marriages promote religious indifference, by which the spiritual life of the soul is destroyed; they put an end to domestic peace, cause mutual aversion, quarrels, and confusion; they give scandal to the servants; they interfere with the education of the children, even render it purely impossible, and they frequently lead to apostacy and despair. But the Catholic Church especially condemns those mixed marriages, in which either all or a number of the children are brought up in heresy, and she can never look upon those as her children and give them her blessing, who do not fear to withdraw themselves and their own children from the only saving faith, and expose them to the danger of eternal ruin. Therefore,

*) This ceremony of the stole is not mentioned in the Ritual, and is simply a custom of some parts of Europe. *Trans.*

those Catholics who enter the matrimonial union with heretics, and permit their children to be brought up in heresy, although the marriage, if lawfully contracted, is valid, commit a mortal sin, and if, at the same time, they receive the holy Sacraments of Penance and of the Altar, commit also a terrible sacrilege.

What should the newly married couple do immediately after the ceremony is performed?

They should kneel down and thank God for the graces received in this holy Sacrament, in these words: "Ratify, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that which by Thy grace Thou hast wrought in us, that we may keep that which in Thy presence we have promised unto the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." And that they may keep it, they should remember the duties placed before them by the priest in their marriage blessing, and the exhortations given by him, which are taken from the epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians (*Eph.* v. 29. 31.), wherein he instructs married people how they should comport themselves to each other, and recalls to them as an example the union of Christ with His Church, and His love for her. To the husbands he says, that they should love their wives as Christ loved His Church, for which He even gave Himself up to death, from which is seen, that men should assist their wives even unto death, in all need, and not treat them as servants. To the wives St. Paul says, that they as the weaker should be in all reasonable things obedient to their husbands as the Church is obedient to Christ; for as Christ is the head of the Church, so is the husband the head of the wife. Experience proves, there is no better way for women to win the hearts of their husbands than by amiable obedience and ready love, while, on the contrary, a querulous, imperative deportment robs them of their husbands' affections, and even causes them to be regarded with aversion. St. Paul says further, that husbands should love their wives (and consequently wives their husbands) as their own bodies, because married people are, as it were, one. They shall be two in one flesh; no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ doth the Church. (*Eph.* v. 29. 31.) How unjustly and barbarously do those, then, act, who, instead of loving one another, caring for one another, rather hate and outrage each other, and by detraction cause the loss of their property, and steal away their honor! These do not consider that he who hates and disgraces his life's partner, hates and disgraces himself; while he, according to St. Paul's words, who loves her, loves himself. If married people would remain in constant love and unity, it is most necessary that they should patiently bear with each other's infirmities, wrongs, and defects, exhort one another with mildness and affection, keep their adversities, trials, and sufferings as much as possible to themselves, and complain only to God, in prayer,

who alone can aid them. By impatience, quarrels, and complaints the cross becomes only heavier and the evil worse. Finally, not only on their wedding day but often through life, they should earnestly consider, that they have not entered the married state that they may inordinately serve the pleasures of the body, but to have children, according to the will of God, who will one day inhabit heaven; for, said the angel to Tobias: For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power. (*Tob.* vi. 17.)

PRAYER. Most merciful Jesus! who to reveal us Thy power and to honor married life, didst work Thy first miracle at the wedding in Cana, by changing water into wine: grant, we beseech Thee, that Thy faithful may keep ever sacred and inviolate the holy Sacrament of Matrimony, and that they may so live in it truthfully, with the fear of the Lord, that they may not put an obstacle in the way of obtaining heaven for themselves, and for their children.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS.

[Second Sunday after Epiphany.]

Who instituted this festival?

Pope Innocent xiii. who, in the year 1721, commanded that the most holy name of Jesus should be festively honored throughout the Catholic world, although, a few centuries before this, St. Bernard, with the sanction of the Apostolic See, had established the solemn veneration of this most holy name, in his order.

In the Introit of this day's Mass, the Church thus shows the glory of this name: "In the name of Jesus every knee should bow of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth; and every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father." (*Phil.* ii. 10. 11.) "Lord, our God, how admirable is Thy name in the whole earth!" (*Ps.* vii. 1.) Glory be to the Father, etc.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who didst design Thy only begotten Son for the Redeemer of mankind, and

commanded the name of Jesus to be given Him, mercifully grant, that we may, one day, be made worthy to behold His face in heaven whose holy name we honor on earth. Through the same Jesus Christ, &c.

LESSON. (*Acts.* iv. 8—13.) Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said to them: Ye princes of the people and ancients, hear: If we this day are examined concerning the good deed done to this infirm man, by what means he hath been made whole, be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God has raised from the dead, even by him this man standeth before you whole. This is the stone which was rejected by you the builders, which is become the head of the corner: neither is there salvation in any other. For there is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved.

EXPLANATION. This lesson speaks of the omnipotence of the name of Jesus, through which not only are miracles performed, but on which alone our salvation depends. For Jesus alone can give us redemption and happiness; He alone under heaven has been given to man by God, that through Him happiness could be reached; He alone can break the fetters of error and sin in which all mankind, every human being, lies captured. He alone is the truth, He alone, as the Son of God, has power to give perfect satisfaction for sin, and to make us truly good; and the good alone can be saved. Cling, therefore, ever faithfully and firmly to Jesus, and depart not from Him; without Him you can accomplish nothing; with Him, through Him you can accomplish all things.

[For the gospel of this day, see the gospel of New-Year's day.]

REMARKS OF ST. BERNARD ON THE SWEET NAME OF JESUS.

The holy name of Jesus produces holy thoughts in us, fills the soul with noble sentiments, strengthens virtue, lets good works bloom, and nourishes pure affections. All nourishment leaves our soul dry, if it contains not that penetrating oil, the name Jesus. When you take up your pen, write the name Jesus: you may make books, but if the name of Jesus is not in them, you are without strength and flavor for me; you may speak, or you may reply, but if the name of Jesus sounds not from your lips, you are without unction and without charm. Yes, it must be owned:

Jesus is honey in our mouth, light in our eyes, a flame in our heart. This name is the cure for all the ills of the soul. Art thou troubled? think but of Jesus, speak but the name of Jesus, the clouds disperse, and peace descends anew from heaven.*) Hast thou fallen into sin? and doest thou fear the net of death? invoke the name of Jesus, and soon wilt thou feel life returning. No obduracy of the soul, no weakness, no coldness, resists this holy name; no heart is so closed that it is not moved, and opens not in tears, to the name of Christ Jesus. Art thou surrounded by sorrow and danger? invoke the name of Jesus, and thy fears will vanish. Never yet was human being in urgent need, and on the point of perishing, who invoked this helpgiving name, and was not powerfully sustained. It was given us for the cure of all our ills; it softens the impetuosity of anger, the fire of concupiscence, the movements of pride, the smart of our wounds, the thirst of avarice, the sensual passions, and the desires of low pleasures. If we call it to our minds, the very name of Jesus brings before us the most meek and humble heart of Jesus, and gives us a new knowledge of the most loving and tender compassion that ever yet was seen. The name of Jesus Christ, the purest and holiest, the noblest and most indulgent of men, of the God-Man, of sanctity itself, the name of all blessings and of all virtues! To think of Jesus is to think of the infinite great God, who, while He has given His life as an example to ours, has also given us the needful understanding and energy, and the assistance necessary to enable us to follow and imitate Him, in our thoughts and inclinations, and in our words and actions. If the name of Jesus reaches the depths of our heart, it leaves heavenly virtue there. We say, therefore, with our great master, St. Paul, the Apostle: If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema. (i. *Cor.* xvi. 22.)

INSTRUCTION FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

The Introit of the day's Mass says: "Adore the Lord, all you his angels. Sion heard his voice, and rejoiced; and the daughters of Juda exulted. The Lord hath reigned, let the earth rejoice, let many islands be glad. (*Ps.* xcvi. 1.) Glory be to the Father, etc.

*) St. Bernardine says the same: "Does grief bow us heavily, then we but the more loudly call on Jesus."

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Almighty and eternal God! look mercifully on our weakness, and extend the right hand of Thy majesty for our protection. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

EPISTLE. (*Rom.* xii. 16—21.) Brethren: Be not wise in your own conceits. To no man rendering evil for evil. Providing good things not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as in you, having peace with all men. Not revenging yourselves, my dearly beloved, but give place unto wrath. For it is written: Revenge to me: I will repay, saith the Lord. But if thy enemy be hungry, give him to eat: if he thirst, give him to drink. For doing this, thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil by good.

When are we overcome by evil?

When we wish to take revenge. "Revenge is no sign of courage," says St. Ambrose, "but rather of weakness and cowardice. As it is the sign of a very weak stomach, to be unable to digest its food, so it is the mark of a very weak mind, to be unable to bear a harsh word." „Are you impatient," says the same saint, „you are overcome; are you patient, you have overcome."

What should we do, if our reputation is injured?

We should leave its revenge, or its defence and protection to God, who has retained that for Himself. "But as a good name," says St. Francis de Sales, "is the main support of human society, and as without it we could not be useful to that society, but even hurtful to it, on account of the scandal, we should feel bound, for love of our neighbor, to aim after a good reputation, and to preserve it." We should not be too sensitive about this, however, for too great sensitiveness makes one obstinate, excentric, and intolerable, and only excites the malice of the detracters all the more. The silence and contempt with which we meet a slander or an injustice, is generally a more efficacious antidote than sensitiveness, anger, or revenge. The contempt for a slander at once disperses it all, but anger shows a weakplace, and gives the accusation an appearance of probability. If this does not suffice, and the slander continues, let us persevere in humility, and lay our honor and our soul into the hands of God, and they will be more speedily cared for than in any other manner.

How do we "heap coals of fire on the head of our enemy?"

When we return good to him, for the sake of God, and seeing how well me mean towards him, the flush of shame reddens his

face for the wrongs he has done us. St. Augustine explains the words also in this manner: "By giving food and drink or doing other kindnesses to your enemy, you will heap coals, not of anger, but of love, upon his head, which will inflame him to return love for love." Learn, therefore, from the example of Christ and His saints not to allow yourself to be overcome by evil, but do good to those that hate and persecute you.

ASPIRATION. Ah, that I might, according to the words of St. Paul, so act that I might be a child of the Heavenly Father, who lets His sun shine on the just and the unjust!

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* viii. 1—13.) AT THAT TIME: When Jesus was come down from the mountain, great multitudes

followed him. And behold, a leper came and adored him, saying: Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus stretching forth his hand, said: I will, be thou made clean. And forthwith his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith to him: See thou, tell no man: but go shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift which Moses commanded for a testimony unto them. And when he had come into Capharnaum, there came to him a centurion, beseeching him, and saying: Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, and is grievously tormented. And Jesus saith to him: I will come and heal him. And the centurion making answer said: Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man subject to authority, having under me soldiers, and I say to this, Go, and he goeth, and to another, Come, and he cometh, and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. And Jesus hearing this, marvelled; and said to them that followed him: Amen, I say to you, I have not found so great faith in Israel. And I say to you, that many shall come from the East and the West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven: but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into the exterior darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said to the centurion: Go, and as thou hast believed, so be it done to thee. And the servant was healed at the same hour.

Why did the leper say: "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean?"

He thus showed his faith that Christ, the Redeemer promised to the world, being the true God, could make him well. From this we learn to have confidence in the omnipotence of God, who is a helper in all need (*Ps.* cvi. 6. 13. 19.), and to leave all to the divine will of God, in such words as these: "Lord, if it be pleasing to Thee, and well for me, grant me this or that."

Why did Jesus extend His hand to touch the leper?

To show that He was above the law which forbade the touching of a leper for fear of infection, which could not apply to Jesus; to reveal the health-giving, curative power of His flesh,

which dispelled leprosy by the simple touch of His hand; to give us an example of humility and of love to the poor sick, that we may learn from Him to have no aversion to the infirm, but lovingly to assist the unfortunate sick, for the sake of Jesus, who took upon Himself the leprosy of our sins, whom the saints have so faithfully imitated in their tender care of the most disgusting diseases. Oh, how hard it will be for those to stand before the Tribunal of God at the Last Day, who cannot even bear to look at the poor and sick!

Why did Christ command the leper to tell no man?

To instruct us that we should not trumpet around our good works in order to obtain frivolous praise (*Matt.* vi. 1.), by which we deprive ourselves of their heavenly reward.

Why did Christ send the healed leper to the priest?

That he might observe the law, which required all the healed lepers to show themselves to the priests, to offer a sacrifice, to be examined and pronounced clean; that the priest if he beheld the miracle of the sudden cure of the leper, might know Him who had wrought the cure, to be the Messiah; and finally, to teach us that we must honor the priests because of their high position, even when they do not live in a manner worthy of their dignity, as was the case with the Jewish priests.

What is taught by the centurion's care for his servant?

That masters should take care of their sick servants, see that they are attended to in their illness, and above all that they are provided with the Sacraments. It is unchristian, yes, even cruel and barbarous, to drive from the house a poor, sick servant, or to leave him lying in his distress without assistance or care.

Why did Christ say: I will come, and heal him?

Because of His humility, by which He, although God and Lord of Lords, did not hesitate to visit a sick servant. Christ's humility in this, shames many persons of position who think themselves too exalted to move hand or foot for a poor servant.

Why did the centurion say: Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof?

Because he recognised Christ's divinity and his own nothingness, and therefore regarded himself as unworthy to receive Him in his house.

From this we learn to humble ourselves, especially when, in holy Communion, we receive Christ into our hearts, for which purpose the priest in its administration generally uses the centurion's words, to exhort those who are about to receive, to humility.

Why did he add: But only say the word, and my servant shall be healed?

By this he publicly manifested his faith in Christ's divinity and omnipotence, of whom he believed that, though absent, He could heal the servant, with a word.

If a gentile centurion had such faith in Christ, and such confidence in His power, should we Christians not be ashamed that we are of such little faith, and so distrustful of God?

What is meant by this: Many shall come from the East and the West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out?

This was said by Christ in reference to the obdurate Jews, who would not believe in Him, nor accept His doctrine. Many pagans who live near the rising and the setting sun, will receive the gospel, live in accordance with it, and will enjoy heavenly bliss with the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were the most ardent friends of God, while the Jews, God's chosen people, who as such, possessed the first claim to heaven, will, because of their unbelief and other sins, be cast into outer darkness, that is, into the deepest abyss of hell, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Thus will it be with those Christians who do not live in accordance with their faith. Therefore, fear lest you, for want of cooperation with God's grace, be eternally rejected, while others who have faithfully cooperated with it, will enter in your place into the kingdom of heaven.

ASPIRATION. O Jesus, rich in consolations! grant me the leper's faith and confidence, that in all things I may rely upon Thine omnipotence, and may resign myself to Thy divine will, and may ever honor Thy priests. Grant me, also, O most humble Jesus! the centurion's humility, that, for Thy sake, I may compassionately assist my neighbor, and by doing so, render myself worthy of Thy grace and mercy.

ON RESIGNATION TO THE WILL OF GOD.

Lord, if thou wilt. (*Matt.* viii. 2.)

THose who in good as in evil fortune are perfectly resigned to the will of God, or conform their will to His, and accept whatever He sends them with joy and thanks, possess heaven, as St. Chrysostom says, while yet upon earth. Those who have gained this resignation, are saddened by no adversity, because they are satisfied with all that God, their best Father, sends them, be it honor or disgrace, wealth or poverty, life or death. All happens

as they will, because they know no will but God's, and He does as they will, because they desire nothing but that which He does and wills. God does the will of those that fear Him (*Ps.* cxliv. 19.). In the lives of the old fathers, we find the following: The fields and vineyards belonging to one farmer, were much more fertile and yielding than were his neighbors'. They asked how it happened, and he said: they should not wonder at it, because he always had the weather he wished. At this they wondered more than ever: How could that be? "I never wish for other weather," he replied, "than God wishes; and because I wish as He wishes, He gives me the fruits I wish." This submission to the divine Will is also the cause of that constant peace and undimned joy of the saints of God, with which their hearts have owerflowed here below, even in the midst of the greatest sufferings and afflictions. Who would not aspire to so happy a state? We will attain to it, if we believe that nothing in this world can happen to us except by the will and through the direction of God, sin and guilt excepted, for God can never be the cause of them. This the Holy Ghost inculcates by the mouth of the wise man: Good things and evil, life and death, poverty and riches, are from God (*Eccl.* xi. 14.), that is, are permitted or sent by God; that all that comes from God, is for the best, for God doeth all things well. (*Mark.* vii. 37.) Whoever keeps these two fundamental truths always in mind, will certainly be ever contented with the will of God, and always consoled; he will taste while yet on earth the undisturbed peace of mind and foretaste of happiness which the saints had while here, and which they now eternally enjoy in heaven, because of the union of their will with the divine.

INSTRUCTION FOR MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

The master of a house should be careful to have not only obedient, faithful, willing, and industrious servants in his home, as had the centurion in the gospel, but still more pious and god-fearing ones, for God richly blesses the master because of pious servants. Thus God blessed Laban on account of the pious Jacob (*Gen.* xxx. 30.), and the house of Potiphar because of the just Joseph (*Gen.* xxxix. 5.). Thus the master should look to the morals and Christian conduct of his servants, and not suffer unrighteous ones in his house, for he must, after this life, give an account before the Tribunal of God, and he makes himself unworthy of the blessing of God, and even of the most terrible punishment by retaining such. For will God not punish those masters and mistresses who suffer those under them to seek the dangerous occasions of sin, keep sinful company, go about at night, and lead scandalous lives? Will not God, one day, demand the souls of servants from their masters? The same punishment which will befall those

who deny their faith, will rest upon the careless masters and mistresses, for St. Paul, the Apostle, writes: For if any man have not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he hath denied his faith, and is worse than an infidel. (i. *Tim.* v. 8.)

Servants should learn from the centurion's servants who obeyed his single word, that they also should willingly, industriously, and quickly do every thing ordered by their masters, unless it be something not lawful or sinful. They should recollect that whatever they do for their masters, is done for God Himself. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not serving to the eye, as pleasing men, but in simplicity of heart, fearing God. Whatsoever you do, do it from the heart, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that you shall receive of the Lord the reward of inheritance. Serve ye the Lord Christ. (*Col.* iii. 22—24.)

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

[The Introit of the Mass as on the preceding Sunday.]

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who knowest that exposed to so many dangers, we through human weakness cannot stand, give us strength of mind and body, that by Thy aid we may overcome that which, on account of our sins, we may be called on to endure. Through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, &c.

EPISTLE. (*Romans* xiii. 8—10.) Brethren: Owe no man anything, but to love one another. For he that loveth his neighbor, hath fulfilled the law. For: "Thou shalt not commit adultery: Thou shalt not kill: Thou shalt not steal: Thou shalt not bear false witness: Thou shalt not covet": and if there be any other commandment, it is comprised in these words: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The love of our neighbor worketh no evil. Love therefore is the fulfilling of the law.

What is meant by St. Paul's words: Who loves his neighbor, hath fulfilled the law?

ST. Augustine says in reference to this, that he who loves his neighbor, fulfils not only the first, but also the second tablet of the law. The reason is, that the love of our neighbor contains and presupposes the love of God as its fountain and foundation.

For the neighbor must be loved on account of God; for the neighbor cannot be loved with true love, if God is not loved first, and at the same time. On this account, the holy Evangelist St. John gave, in his old age, among his instructions the exhortation: Little children, love one another. And when asked why, he answered: Because it is the command of the Lord, and it is enough that it should be fulfilled. Therefore in this love of the neighbor which comes from the love of God and is contained in it, consists the fulfilment of the whole law. (*Matt.* xxii. 40.)

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* viii. 23—27.) At that time: When Jesus entered into a boat, his disciples followed him: and behold, a great tempest arose in the sea, so that the boat

was covered with waves, but he was asleep. And they came to him, and awakened him, and said: Lord, save us, we perish. And Jesus saith to them: Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then rising up, he commanded the winds and the sea, and there came a great calm. But the men wondered, saying: What manner of man is this, for the winds and the sea obey him?

Why did Christ sleep in the boat?

To test His disciples' faith and trust; to exercise them in enduring the persecutions which would come to them later; to teach us that we should not waver in the storms of temptations. So St. Augustine writes: "Christ slept, and because of the danger the disciples were confused. Why? Christ slept. Even so thy heart becomes confused, unquiet thy ship, when the waves of temptation break over it? Why? Thy faith sleeps. Then shouldst thou awaken Christ in thy heart; then will thy faith be awakened, quieted thy conscience, calm thy ship."

Why did Christ reproach His disciples when they awakened Him and asked for help?

Because of their little faith and trust; for if they firmly believed Him to be true God, they would necessarily believe He could aid them sleeping as well as waking.

Nothing so displeases God as doubt of His powerful assistance. Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh (mortal man) his arm (aid), and whose heart departeth from the Lord. Blessed be the man that trusteth in the Lord, and the Lord shall be his confidence. (*Jerem.* xvii. 5. 7.) God sometimes permits storms to come about us, such as poverty, persecution, sickness, so that we may have occasion to put our confidence in Him alone. Of this St. Bernard very beautifully says: "When the world rages, when the wicked become furious, when the flesh turns against the spirit, I will hope in Him. Who has trusted Him, and been brought to shame?" We should therefore trust in God only, and take refuge with Him, invoking Him as did the disciples: Lord, save us, we perish; or cry out with David: Arise, why sleepest thou, O Lord? Arise, and cast us not off to the end. (*Ps.* xliii. 23.)

Why did Jesus stand up and command the sea to be still?

To show His readiness to aid us, and His omnipotence to which all things were subject. Thus the people who saw this miracle, wondered and said: What manner of man is this, for the winds and the sea obey Him?

We daily see in all creatures the wonders of the omnipotence, of the wisdom, and the goodness of God, and yet we are not

touched; we continue cold and indifferent to God. The reason is, that we look upon all with the eyes of the body and not with the eyes of the soul; that is, we do not seek to ascend by meditation to the Creator, and to judge from the manifold beauty and usefulness of created things the goodness and the wisdom of God. The saints rejoiced in all the works of the Lord; a flower, a little worm of the earth would move the heart of St. Francis of Sales, the Seraph, to wonderment and the love of God; they ascended, as on a ladder, from the contemplation of creatures to Him, who gives to every thing life, motion, and existence. If we were to follow their example, we would certainly love God more, and more ardently desire Him; if we do not, we live like irrational men, we who were certainly created only to know and to love God.

ASPIRATION. Grant us, O best Jesus! in all our needs, a great confidence in Thy divine assistance, and do not allow us to become faint-hearted; let Thy assistance come to us in the many dangers to which we are exposed; command the turbulent winds and waves of persecution to be still, and give peace and calmness to Thy Church which Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood, that we may serve Thee in sanctity and justice, and arrive safely at the desired haven of eternal happiness. Amen.

ON THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

But he was asleep. (*Matt.* viii. 24.)

IT is an article of faith in the holy Catholic Church, that God has not only created the world, but that He sustains and governs it; this preservation and ruling of the whole world and of each individual creature in it, is called Providence. There are people who think, that God is too great a Lord, to busy Himself about the care of this world, that to do so is beneath His majesty; it was enough for Him to create the world (and they hardly believe He has done this), and, for the rest, He leaves it to itself, or to fate, enjoys His own happiness, and, as it were, sleeps in regard to us. Thus think some, but only the unwise and unrighteous. For what manner of God would He be, who is of the nature, these imagine? Either He will not, or cannot have aught to do with creation. Can He not? then He is neither all-wise nor almighty. Will He not? then He is not good; and if He knows nothing of the world, then He is not omniscient.

If we once believe that God created the world (and what rational man can doubt it?), then we must also believe He rules and sustains it. Can any work of art, however well constructed and arranged, subsist without some one to take charge and watch over it? Would not the greatest of all masterpieces, the world,

therefore, come to the greatest confusion and fall back into its original nothingness, if God who had taken it from that nothingness, did not take care of its further order and existence? It is indeed true that the ways of God's providence or the ways and means of His government, are often so concealed that, when considering some events, one is persuaded to admit a necessary fate, an accident, the course of nature, the ill will of the devil or man, as the fundamental cause. Yet in all this the providence of God is not denied. In regard to God nothing does or can happen accidentally, not the smallest thing occurs without the knowledge, permission, or direction of God. Not one sparrow shall fall on the ground without your Father; but the very hairs of your head are numbered. (*Matt.* x. 29. 30.) Chance, fate, and luck are but the phantoms of insane or wicked men, which even the more rational heathens have rejected, and the course of nature is but the constant, uninterrupted, allwise, and bountiful preservation and government, through God, of creation. The perverted will of men or of the devil, is but the instrument which God, in His allwise intention, uses to effect the good, for He knows how to produce good from the evil He permits, and, therefore, as St. Augustine says, "permits the evil that the good may not be left undone." The holy Scriptures give testimony in almost every page of this manner of God's acting. If we peruse the history of our first parents, of Abraham, of Joseph in Egypt, of Moses, of the people of Israel, of Job, Ruth, David, Tobias, Esther, Judith, and others, we will easily everywhere see the plainest signs of the wisest providence, the best and most careful absolute power, by virtue of which God knows how to direct all things according to His desire, and for the best good of His chosen ones. The gospel of this day is also a proof of this. Why did Christ go into the boat? Why did a storm arise? Why was He asleep? Did all this occur by accident? No, it came about designedly by direction of Christ, that His omnipotence might be seen, and the faith and confidence of His disciples be strengthened.

Thus it is certain that God foresees, directs, and governs all; as Scripture, reason, and daily experience prove. Would we but pay more attention to many events of our lives, we would certainly plainly notice the providence of God, and give ourselves up to His guidance and dispensations. The Lord ruleth me, and I shall want for nothing, says David. (*Ps.* xxii. 1.) And we also, we shall want for nothing if we resign ourselves to God's will, and are contented with His dispensations in our regard; while, on the contrary, if we oppose His will, we shall fall into misfortune and error. For God must rule over us with goodness, or with sternness. He is no sleeping God. Behold! He shall neither slumber nor sleep that keepeth Israel. (*Ps.* cxx. 4.)

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

[For the Introit of this day, see the Introit in the Mass of the third Sunday after Epiphany.]

On this Sunday mention is made of the practice of the Christian virtues, and of God's sufferance of the wicked upon earth, that by them the just may be exercised in patience.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Guard Thy family with Thy eternal mercy, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that, as it sets its hope on Thy heavenly grace alone, it may always find security in Thy protection. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

EPISTLE. (*Col.* iii. 12—17.) Brethren: Put ye on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy, and beloved, the bowels of mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, patience: bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if any have a complaint against another. Even as the Lord hath forgiven you, so you also. But above all these things have charity, which is the bond of perfection: and let the peace of Christ rejoice in your hearts, wherein also you are called in one body: and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you abundantly, in all wisdom: teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual canticles, singing in grace in your hearts to God. All whatsoever you do in word or in work, all things do ye in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.

Why does St. Paul call charity the bond of perfection?

Because charity comprises in itself, and links together all the virtues in which perfection consists. For whoever truly loves God and his neighbor, is also good, merciful, humble, modest, patiently bears the weakness of his neighbor, willingly forgives offences, in a word, practises all virtues for the sake of charity, without which there is no true virtue.

When does the peace of God rejoice in our hearts?

When we have learned to conquer our evil inclinations, passions, and desires, and have replaced them in our hearts by order and quiet. This peace then, like a queen, keeps all the wishes of the soul in harmony, and causes us to enjoy constant peace with our neighbor, and thus serve Christ in concord, as the members of one body serve the head. The best means of preserving this

peace, are an earnest attention to the word of God, and mutual imparting of pious exhortations and admonitions, and singing of hymns, psalms, and spiritual canticles.

Why should we do all in the name of Jesus?

Because only then can our works have real worth in the sight of God, and be pleasing to Him, when they are performed for love of Jesus, in His honor, in accordance with His spirit and will. Therefore the apostle admonishes us that we should do all, eat, drink, sleep, work, &c., in the name of Jesus, and so honor God, the Heavenly Father, and show our gratitude to Him. Oh, how grieved on their deathbed will they be who have neglected to offer God their daily work by a good intention, when they will see, too late, how devoid they are of meritorious deeds, and, on the contrary, how will they rejoice whose consciences testify, that in all their actions they had in view only the will and the honor of God! Would that this might be taken to heart especially by those who have to earn their bread with difficulty and in distress, that they might always unite their hardships and trials with the sufferings and merits of Jesus, offering them to the Heavenly Father, and thus imitating Christ, who had no other motive than the will and the glory of His Heavenly Father.

ASPIRATION. O God of love, of patience, and of mercy, turn our hearts to the sincere love of our neighbor, and grant, that whatever we do in thoughts, words, and actions, we may do in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and through Him render thanks to Thee.

ON THE CHOIR OR CHURCH SINGING.

Admonish one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual canticles, singing in grace in your hearts to God. (*Col.* iii. 16.)

The custom of singing in the Church-choir*) has its foundation as far back as the Old Testament, when, by the arrangement of David, Solomon, and Ezechias, the psalms and other sacred canticles were sung by the priests and levites. This custom the Catholic Church has preserved, after the precepts of the apostles (i. *Cor.* xiv. 26.; Eph. v. 19.), and the example of Jesus who, after they had eaten the pasch, intoned a hymn of praise with His apostles (Matt. xxvi. 30.), that Christians on earth, like the angels and saints in heaven (Apoc. v. 8. 9., xiv. 3.), who unceasingly sing His praises, might at certain hours of the day, at least, give praise and thanks to God. In the earliest times of the

*) The choir is usually a gallery in the Church in which the singers are stationed; the place in which the clergy sing or recite their office, is also called the choir.

Church, the Christians sang hymns of praise and thanksgiving, during the holy Sacrifice and other devotional services, often continuing them throughout the whole night; in which case the choir-singers probably sang in certain order, and according to a settled agreement. This singing, in time, ceased to be general, became confined to the choir, which was accompanied, later, by instruments, as incited by David who calls to the praise of the Lord with trumpets, with timbrels, with pleasant psaltery and harps. (*Ps.* cl. 3. 4., lxxx. 3. 4.) In many Churches, however, the praiseworthy habit of all the faithful singing together during the service, is retained, and if this is done with pure, godpleasing hearts, and true devotion, it is, as St. Basil says, "a heavenly occupation, a spiritual burnt offering; it enlightens the spirit, raises towards heaven, leads man to communion with God, makes the soul rejoice, ends idle talk, puts away laughter, reminds us of the judgment, reconciles enemies. Where the singing of songs resounds from the contrite heart, there God with the angels is present."

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xiii. 24—30.) At that time: Jesus proposed another parable to them, saying: The kingdom of heaven is likened to a man, who sowed good seed in his field. But while men were asleep, his enemy came and oversowed cockle among the wheat, and went his way. And when the blade was sprung up, and had brought forth fruit, then appeared also the cockle, and the servants of the good man of the house coming, said to him: Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? whence then hath it cockle? And he said to them: An enemy hath done this. And the servants said to him: Wilt thou that we go and gather it up? And he said: No, lest perhaps gathering up the cockle, you root up the wheat also together with it. Suffer both to grow until the harvest, and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers: Gather up first the cockle, and bind it into bundles to burn, but the wheat gather ye into my barn.

What is understood by the kingdom of heaven?

The Church of God, or the collection of all orthodox Christians on earth, destined for heaven.

What is meant by the good seed, and by the cockle?

The good seed, as Christ Himself says (*Matt.* xiii. 38.), signifies the children of the kingdom, that is, the true Christians, the living members of the Church, also the word of God, which

makes us children of God. The cockle means the children of iniquity, of the devil (*John* iii. 8.), that is, those who do evil; also every wrong, false doctrine which leads men to evil.

Who sows the good seed?

The good seed is sown by Jesus, the Son of Man, not only directly, but also through His apostles, and the priests, their successors; the evil seed is sown by the devil, or by wicked men whom he uses as his tools.

Who are the men who were asleep?

Those superiors in the Church, those bishops and pastors, who take no care of their flock, and do not warn them against seduction, when the devil comes and by wicked men sows the cockle of erroneous doctrine and of crime; and those men who

are careless and neglect to hear the word of God and holy Mass, to practise prayer, and avail themselves of the holy Sacraments, so, in whose souls the devil sows the seeds of bad thoughts, evil imaginings and desires, from which spring, later, the cockle of pride, impurity, anger, envy, avarice, &c.

Why does God not allow the cockle, that is, the wicked people, to be rooted out and destroyed?

Because of His patience and long suffering towards the sinner to whom He gives time for repentance, and because of His love for the just from whom He would not, by weeding out the unjust, take away the occasion of practising virtue and gathering up merits for themselves; for because of the unjust, the just have numerous opportunities to exercise patience, humility, &c.

When is the time of the harvest?

The day of the last judgment when the reapers, that is, the angels, will go out and separate the wicked from the just, and throw the wicked into the furnace of fire, while the just will be taken into everlasting joy. (*Matt.* xiii. 49.)

PRAYER. O faithful Jesus, Thou greatest lover of our souls, who hast sown the good seed of Thy divine word in our hearts, that it may bear rich fruit for eternal life, grant that this seed may live and be productive in us; protect us from our evil enemy, that he may not oversow his erroneous and false doctrine in our hearts, and corrupt the good; keep us from the sleep of sin, and from indolence in the good, that we may remain always vigilant and armed against the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, overcome them manfully, and die a happy death. Amen.

ON INCLINATION TO EVIL.

Whence comes the cockle? (*Matt.* xiii. 29.)

Whence comes the inclination to evil in man?

IT is the sad consequence of original sin, that is, of that sin, which our first parents, by their disobedience, committed in paradise, and which we have inherited as their descendants. This inclination to evil remains even in those who have been baptized, although original sin with its guilt and eternal punishment, is taken away in baptism, but it is no sin as long as man does not voluntarily yield to it. (*Cat. Rom. Part.* ii. c. 2. §. 43.)

Why, the sin being removed, does the inclination remain?

To humble us, to make us see our weakness, our great misery, that we may turn to God as our best and mightiest Father, as did St. Paul when he was much annoyed by the devil of the

flesh (ii. *Cor.* xii. 7. 8.); that the glory of God and the power of Christ should be manifested in us, which except for our weakness could not be; that we might have occasion to fight and to conquer, and not become idle. A soldier cannot battle without opposition, nor win victory and the crown without a contest. Nor can we win the heavenly crown, if no occasion is given us, by temptations, for fight and for victory. "That which tires the combatant," says St. Bernard, "crowns the conqueror." Finally, the inclination remains, that we may learn to endure, in all meekness, the faults and infirmities of others and to watch ourselves, lest we fall into the same temptations.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

[For the Introit of this day's Mass, see the Introit of the third Sunday after Epiphany.]

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that we may always consider that which is reasonable, and in words and in actions do only that which is pleasing to Thee. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

EPISTLE. (i. *Thess.* i. 2—10.) Brethren: We give thanks to God always for you all: making a remembrance of you in our prayers without ceasing; being mindful of the work of your faith, and labour, and charity, and of the enduring of the hope of our Lord Jesus Christ, before God and our Father: knowing, brethren beloved of God, your election: for our gospel hath not been unto you in word only, but in power also, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much fulness, as you know what manner of men we have been among you for your sakes. And you became followers of us and of the Lord: receiving the word in much tribulation, with joy of the Holy Ghost: so that you were made a pattern to all who believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you were spread abroad the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith, which is towards God, is gone forth, so that we need not to speak anything. For they themselves relate of us, what manner of entering in we had unto you; and how you turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from

heaven (whom he raised up from the dead), Jesus, who hath redeemed us from the wrath to come.

EXPLANATION. The apostle here gives God thanks in prayer for those inhabitants of Thessalonia, who have been converted to Christianity by his words, and gives them to understand his joy at their Christian life, which they prove by their good works and their perseverance, even through all trials, in expectation of eternal reward through Christ. He assures them also of their salvation (election), because God had caused the preaching of His gospel, which they so willingly received, to produce such extraordinary fruit in them. He praises them not only for having listened to the gospel and abandoned idolatry, but for having directed their life in accordance with the faith, and become a model to distant nations, for the report of their faith had spread far, and everywhere their zealous reception of the gospel was spoken of. Would that the same could be said of us Christians!

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xiii. 31—35.) At that time: Jesus proposed another parable unto them, saying: The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: which is the least indeed of all seeds: but when it is grown up, it is greater than all herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and dwell in the branches thereof. Another parable he spoke to them: The kingdom of heaven is like to leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened. All these things Jesus spoke in parables to the multitudes; and without parables he did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world.

What is here understood by the kingdom of heaven?

The Church and the doctrine of Christ, that lead to heaven.

Why is the Church compared to a grain of mustard-seed?

Because there is a great likeness between them. The mustard-seed, though so small, grows in Palestine so high and so rapidly, that it becomes a broad tree, in which birds can build their nests. And small, like the mustard-seed, was the beginning of Christ's Church; but it soon spread so widely that numberless people, even great philosophers and princes, came to find peace and protection under her branches.

Why is Christ's doctrine compared to leaven?

Because like the leaven, which quickly penetrates the flower, and makes it palatable bread, the doctrine of Christ, spreading with surprising swiftness over the then known three parts of the globe, gave the gentiles a taste for divine things and for heavenly wisdom. Thus Christ's doctrine penetrates him who receives it, sanctifies all his thoughts, words, and deeds, and makes him pleasing to God.

What are the principal causes of the spreading of Christ's Church and doctrine?

The omnipotence of God and the miracles which He so frequently wrought for their propagation; the sublimity of the doctrine itself, the divine origin of which becomes evident to

careful examination and industrious practice; the courageous faith, and the pure, moral life of the early Christians, which led many pagan minds towards it, and moved them to accept the doctrine of Christ; and the persecution of Christianity, for, as Tertullian says: "The blood of the martyrs was the seed from which the Christians grew." The false doctrine of Mahomet, the erroneous teachings of Luther, Calvin, and older and newer heretics have, it is true, also spread quickly, far and wide; but this is not to be wondered at, for it is easy to lead people to a doctrine that encourages sensuality, and to which they are carried by their evil inclinations themselves, as was the case with the doctrine of the impostor Mahomet, and three hundred years ago with the heresy of Luther; but to spread a doctrine which demands the subduing of the carnal, earthly inclinations, and to bend the will to the yoke of obedience to faith, something more than human eloquence is required! Thus Thomas More, the Chancellor of England, who gave his blood for the true doctrine of Christ, wrote to Luther, who was boasting of the rapid increase of his sect, that: "it was easy to descend, and seducing the people to a bad life was nothing more marvellous than that a heavy stone should fall of its own accord to the ground;" and Melanchton, a friend of Luther, in answer to his mother's question, whether she should remain a Catholic or receive Luther's doctrine, wrote: "In this religion it is easy to live, in the Catholic it is easy to die."

Why did Christ always speak in parables?

That His teaching might by being simple, be so much more easily understood, and better remembered. He who is called upon to teach others, should, as did Christ, always speak to them according to their ability to understand, and by no means seek his own honor, but the honor of God, and the benefit of those who hear him.

PRAYER. O most benign Jesus! How much do we give Thee thanks that Thou hast permitted us to be born in Thy holy Church, and instructed in Thy holy doctrine, which, like the mustard-seed, has grown a large tree, spreading over the whole earth. Grant that under the shadow of this tree, in Thy holy Church, we may ever rest securely, cling to her faithfully, and penetrated, as by leaven, with her doctrine, may bring Thee pleasant fruits of faith and virtue. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

Why is this Sunday called "Septuagesima"?

Because in accordance with the words of the First Council of Orleans, some pious Christian congregations in the earliest ages of the Church, especially the clergy, began to fast seventy days before Easter, on this Sunday, which was therefore called "Septuagesima"—the seventieth day. The same is the case with the Sundays following, which are called Sexagesima, Quinquagesima, Quadragesima, because some Christians commenced to fast sixty days, others fifty, others forty days before Easter, until finally, to make it properly uniform, Popes Gregory and Gelasius arranged that all Christians should fast forty days before Easter, commencing with Ash-Wednesday.

Why, from this day until Easter, does the Church omit from her service all joyful canticles, allelujas, and the Gloria in excelsis, &c.?

To gradually prepare the minds of the faithful for the serious time of penance and sorrow, for sins committed, and for the actual fast. So the priest appears on the altar in violet, the color of penance, and half of the altar is covered with a violet curtain. To arouse our sorrow for our sins, and the need of repentance, the Church at the Introit cries, in the name of all mankind, with David: "The sorrows of death surrounded me, the sorrows of hell encompassed me. In my affliction I called upon the Lord, and he heard my voice from his holy temple." (*Ps.* xvii. 5–9.) I will love thee, O Lord, my strength; the Lord is my firmament, my refuge, my deliverer. (*Ps.* xvii. 2—3.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Mercifully hear, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the cry of Thy people, that for the glory of Thy name, we who are justly afflicted for our sins, may through the fulness of Thy mercy be saved from all punishment. Through our Lord, Jesus Christ, &c.

EPISTLE. (i. *Cor.* ix. 24—27., *and* x. 1—5.) Brethren: Know you not that they that run in the race, all run indeed, but one receiveth the prize? So run that you may obtain. And every one that striveth for the mastery, refraineth himself from all things: and they indeed that they may receive a corruptible crown: but we an incorruptible

one. I therefore so run, not as at an uncertainty: I so fight, not as one beating the air: but I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection: lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway. For I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea. And all in Moses were baptized in the cloud, and in the sea: and did all eat the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink: (and they drank of the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ). But with the most of them God was not well pleased.

EXPLANATION. Besides having exhorted us to penance in the Introit of the Mass, the Church desires to indicate to us, by the reading of this epistle, the effort we should make to reach the kingdom of heaven by the narrow path (*Matt.* vii. 13.) of penance and mortification, whither only those enter who use force. (*Matt.* 12.) This St. Paul illustrates by three different examples. By the example of those who in a race run to one point, or in a prize-fight practise and prepare themselves for the victor's reward by the strongest exercise, and by the strictest abstinence from everything that might weaken the physical powers. If to win a laurel-crown that passes away, these will subject themselves to the severest trials and deprivations, how much more should we, for the sake of the heavenly crown of eternal happiness, abstain from those improper desires, by which the soul is weakened, and practise those holy virtues, such as prayer, love of God and our neighbor, patience, to which the crown is promised! Next, by his own example, bringing himself before them as one running a race, and fighting for an eternal crown, but not as one running blindly he knows not where, or fighting as one who strikes not his antagonist, but the air; but, on the contrary, with his eyes firmly fixed on the eternal crown, certain to be his who lives by the precepts of the gospel, who chastises his spirit and his body, as a valiant champion, with a strong hand, that is, by severest mortification, fasting, and prayer. If St. Paul, notwithstanding the extraordinary graces which he received, thought it necessary to chastise his body that he might not be cast away, how does the sinner expect to be saved, living a soft and luxurious life, without penance and mortification? St. Paul's third example is that of the Jews who all perished on their journey to the Promised Land, even though God had granted them so many graces; for He shielded them from their enemies by a cloud which made light for them at night, and a cooling shade by day; He led them, dryfooted, through the sea; He caused manna to fall from heaven to be their food, and water to gush from the rock

for their drink. These physical benefits which God bestowed upon the Jews in the wilderness had a spiritual meaning for them; for the cloud and the sea in which Moses spiritually baptized them (not in reality, only as in a picture), had reference to the baptism Christ instituted, which enlightens the soul, tames the concupiscence of the flesh, and purifies from sin; the manna was a type of the most holy Sacrament of the Altar, the soul's true bread from heaven; the water from the rock, the blood flowing from Christ's wound in the side; and yet with all these physical graces, which God gave them, and with all the spiritual graces they were to receive by faith from the coming Redeemer, of the six hundred thousand men who left Egypt, only two, Joshua and Caleb, entered the Promised Land. Why? Because they were so fickle, murmured so often against God, and so desired the pleasures of the flesh. How much, then, have we need to fear that we may be excluded from the truly happy Land, Heaven, if we do not continuously struggle for it, by penance and mortification!

ASPIRATION. Assist me, O Jesus, with Thy grace that, following St. Paul's example, I may be anxious, by the constant pious practice of virtue and prayer, to arrive at perfection and to enter heaven.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xx. 1—16.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples this parable: The kingdom of heaven is like to a householder, who went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. And having agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And going out about the third hour, he saw others standing in the market-place idle. And he said to them: Go you also into my vineyard, and I will give you what shall be just. And they went their way. And again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did in like manner. But about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing, and he saith to them: Why stand you there all the day idle? They said to him: Because no man has hired us. He saith to them: Go you also into my vineyard. And when evening was come, the Lord of the vineyard saith to the steward: Call the laborers and pay them their hire, beginning from the last even to the first. When therefore they were come, that came about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first also came, they thought that they

should receive more: and they also received every man a penny. And receiving it, they murmured against the master of the house, saying: These last have worked but one hour, and thou hast made them equal to us that have borne the burden of the day and the heats. But he answering one of them, said: Friend, I have done thee no wrong: didst thou not agree with me for a penny? Take what is thine, and go thy way: I will also give to this last as to thee. Or, is it not lawful for me to do what I will? Is thy eye evil, because I am good? So shall the last be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen.

In this parable, what is to be understood by the householder, the vineyard, the laborers, and the penny?

The householder represents God, who in different ages of the world, in the days of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and finally in the days of Christ and the apostles, has sought to call men as workmen into His vineyard, the true Church, that they might labor there industriously, and receive the penny of eternal glory.

How and when does God call people?

By inward inspiration, by preachers, confessors, spiritual books, and conversations, etc., in flourishing youth and in advanced age, which periods of life may be understood by the different hours of the day.

What is meant by working in the vineyard?

It means laboring, fighting, suffering for God and His honor, for our own and other's salvation. As in a vineyard we spade, dig, root out weeds, cut off the useless and noxious, manure, plant, and bind up, so in the spiritual vineyard of our soul we must, by frequent meditation on death, hell, and by examination of conscience, dig up the evil inclinations by their roots, and by true repentance the weeds of vice, and cut away, by mortification, especially by prayer and fasting, the ever springing concupiscences; by the recollection of our sins, we must humble ourselves, and amend our life; in place of the bad habits we must plant the opposite virtues, and bind our unsteady will to the trellis of the fear of God and of His judgment, that we may continue firm.

How is a vice or bad habit to be rooted up?

It requires so much labor to root up a vice, that it is needed that a great hatred of it should be aroused, that the greatest desire to destroy it, should be created, and that God should be entreated for His grace, without which nothing can be accomplished; it is useful also to read some spiritual book which speaks against the vice, as for instance against anger, impurity, &c.; that the Sacraments of Penance and of holy Communion should be often received, and that some particular saint, who had the same vice, but by the grace of God rooted it up, should be honored, as Mary Magdalen and St. Augustine who each had the habit of impurity, but with the help of God resisted and destroyed it in themselves; there should be fasting, almsdeeds, or other good works, performed for the same object, and it is of great importance, every necessity, that the conscience should be carefully examined in regard to it.

Who are standing idle in the market-place?

In the market-place, that is the world, they are standing idle who, however much business they perform, do not work for God and for their own salvation; for the only necessary employment

is the service of God and the working out of our salvation. There are three ways of being idle: doing nothing whatever; doing evil; doing other things than the duties demanded by the position in life and its office requires, or if this work is done without a good intention, or not from the love of God. This threefold idleness deprives us of our salvation, as the servant loses his wages if he works not at all, or not according to the will of his master. We are all servants of God, and we, none of us, can say with the laborers in the vineyard that no man has hired us; for God, when He created us, hired us at high wages, and we must serve Him at all times and constantly, as He cares for us at all times and constantly; and if, in the gospel, the householder reproaches the workmen, whom no man had hired, for their idleness, what will God, one day, say to those Christians whom He hired for the work in His vineyard, the Church, if they have remained idle?

Why do the last comers receive as much as those who worked all day?

Because God rewards not the time or length of the work, but the industry and diligence employed in virtue. It may indeed happen, that many a one who has served God but for a short time, excels in merits another who has lived long, but has not labored as diligently. (*Wis.* iv.)

What is signified by the murmurs of the earliest workmen when the wages were paid?

As the Jews were properly the first who were called by God, Christ intended to indicate that they, who were displeased that the gentiles, the last called, should one day receive the same reward with them in heaven, would find fault and murmur, which they afterwards did. But it will not be so in heaven; there envy, malevolence, and murmurs will find no place. On the contrary, the saints who long served God, wonder at the goodness of God to the converted sinners, and those who have served Him for but a short time, for these also there will be the same penny, that is, the vision, the enjoyment, and possession of God and His kingdom. Only in the heavenly glory there will be a difference, because the divine lips have assured us, that each one shall be rewarded according to his works. The murmurs of the workmen and the answer of the householder, serve to teach us, that we should not murmur against the merciful proceedings of God towards our neighbor, nor envy him; for envy and jealousy are abominable vices, hated by God, yes, devilish. Through the envy of Satan, death hath come into the world. (*Wis.* ii. 24.) The envious, therefore, imitate Lucifer, but they hurt only themselves, because they are consumed by their envy. "Envy," says St. Basil, "is an institution of the serpent, an invention of the devils, an obstacle to piety, a road to hell, the depriver of the heavenly kingdom."

How is to be understood: The first shall be last, and the last shall be first?

This is again to be understood, properly, of the Jews; for they were the first to be called, but will be the last in number, as in time, because they responded not to Christ's invitation and His doctrine, and will enter the Church only at the end of the world; while, on the contrary, the gentiles, who were not called until after the Jews, are still called, and will be the first in number as in merit, because the greater part responded and are still responding to the call. Christ, indeed, called all the Jews, but few of them answered, and so few were chosen.—Would that this might not also come true with Christians whom God has also called, and whom He wishes, as far as in Him lies, to save (i. *Tim.* ii. 4.); of whom, alas! very few live in accordance with their vocation to work in the vineyard of the Lord, and, consequently, do not receive the penny of eternal bliss.

PRAYER. O most benignant God, who, out of pure grace, without any merit of ours, hast called us, Thy unworthy servants, to the true faith, into the vineyard of the holy Catholic Church, and dost require us to work in it for the sanctification of our souls, grant, we beseech Thee, that we may never be idle, but be found always faithful workmen, and that that which in past years we have failed to do, we may make up for in future by greater zeal and persevering industry, and, the work being done, may receive the promised reward in heaven, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, &c.

INSTRUCTION FOR SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

IN the Introit of this day's Mass, the Church brings before us one who seeks to be loosed from his sins, and calls on God for help and assistance. Arise, why sleepest thou, O Lord? Arise, and cast us not off to the end. Why turnest thou thy face away and forgettest our want and our trouble? for our soul is humbled down to the dust, our belly cleaveth to the earth. (*Ps.* xliii. 23. 26.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who seest that we confide in no action of our own, let us find grace with Thee,

and grant us by the intercession of St. Paul, the Teacher of Nations, that we may be preserved from all adversities. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

EPISTLE. (ii. *Cor.* xi. 19—33.; xii. 1—9.) Brethren: You gladly suffer the foolish: whereas yourselves are wise. For you suffer if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take from you, if a man be lifted up, if a man strike you on the face. I speak according to dishonor, as if we had been weak in this part. Wherein any man dares (I speak foolishly), I dare also. They are Hebrews: so am I. They are Israelits: so am I. They are the seed of Abraham: so am I. They are ministers of Christ (I speak as one less wise), I am more: in many more labors, in prisons more frequently, in stripes above measure, in deaths often. Of the Jews five times did I receive forty stripes, save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I was in the depth of the sea; in journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils from my own nation, in perils from the gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils from false brethren, in labor and painfulness, in many watchings, in hunger and thirst, in many fastings, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things which are without: my daily instance, the solicitude for all the Churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalized, and I am not on fire? If I must needs glory: I will glory of the things that concern my infirmity. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knoweth that I lie not. At Damascus the governor of the nation under Aretas the king guarded the city of the Damascenes to apprehend me. And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and so escaped his hands. If I must glory (it is not expedient indeed): but I will come to the visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body I know not, or out of the body, I know not, God knoweth), such a one rapt even to the third heaven. And I know such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I know not: God knoweth): that he was caught up into paradise, and heard secret words, which it is not granted to man to utter. For such a one will

I glory: but for myself I will glory in nothing, but in my infirmities. For even if I should have a mind of glory, I shall not be foolish: for I will say the truth. But I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth in me, or anything he heareth from me. And lest the greatness of the revelations should lift me up, there was given me a sting of my flesh, an angel of Satan, to buffet me. For which thing thrice I besought the Lord, that it might depart from me, and he said to me: My grace is sufficient for thee; for power is made perfect in infirmity. Gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

Why is St. Paul mentioned in the Mass of this day, and why is this epistle read?

Because, in Rome, the Station or Church service is held, on this day, in the Church of St. Paul, and because the Church continues to encourage us to work according to the example given by St. Paul who, with the grace of God, accomplished and suffered so much; also because we should labor for the honor of God, and the salvation of our souls, and as faithfully cooperate with the grace of God.

Why, in the beginning of this epistle, does St. Paul say so much in his own praise?

Not out of ambition for honor and glory, but to honor God, and for the love and advantage of the Corinthians, who allowed themselves to be deceived by mercenary impostors, and false prophets, who beguiled them out of their goods. That he might make public the craftiness of those deceivers who assumed the appearance of the true apostles, as Satan the form of a good angel. To shame these, and remove the obstacles they had placed in the way of the gospel, St. Paul was obliged to reveal to the Corinthians the things he had performed and endured in propagating the holy gospel.—By trials and sufferings is the true apostle known; the false apostles, the hirelings, as Christ calls them, only care for their own bodies, for temporal advantages, not for the salvation of souls. We see this examplified in our days by the heretical missionaries who, when there is suffering, when there is martyrdom, take to flight, for their eyes are directed only to the present life and a large income, while the Catholic missionaries rejoice if, for Christ's sake, and for the salvation of souls, they are permitted to suffer, and made worthy to endure the cruel death of the martyr.

Who is it of whom St. Paul relates such marvels?

Of himself, but from humility and modesty he does not say so; fourteen years before, forty four years after the birth of

Christ, St. Paul was wrapt to the third heaven, that is, to the abode of happy spirits; but to preserve him in humility God permitted Satan to use the concupiscence of the flesh, which is like a sting in the body of man, as a temptation to the apostle, and continually tormented him with it.

ASPIRATION. Give me the grace, O God, in these evil days of the ever increasing uprising of false doctrines and delusions, to persevere in holding to Thy gospel, which in the holy Catholic Church remains unadulterated, that I may not allow myself to be drawn from it, neither by the charms of the world, nor by its mockery and reproaches.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* viii. 4—15.) At that time: When a very great multitude was gathered together and hastened out of the cities unto him, he spoke by a similitude: The sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside, and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And other some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And other some fell among thorns, and the thorns growing up with it, choked it. And other some fell upon good ground, and being sprung up, yielded fruit an hundredfold. Saying these things, he cried out: He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And his disciples asked him what this parable might be. To whom he said: To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but to the rest in parables, that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. And they by the wayside, are they that hear: then the devil cometh, and taketh the word out of their heart, lest believing they should be saved. Now they upon the rock, are they who when they hear, receive the word with joy: and these have no roots, who believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns, are they who have heard, and going their way, are choked with the cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life, and yield no fruit. But that on the good ground, are they who in a good and perfect heart, hearing the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit in patience.

Why is the word of God compared to a seed?

Because from the word of God germinates the fruit of good works, as from good seed grows good fruit; as it is impossible, therefore, for an unsown field to produce good fruit, so is it impossible for man without the seed of God's word to produce good fruits of the spirit.

Why, in the parable, does Christ cry out: He that hath ears to hear, let him hear?

Because of the importance and necessity of the doctrine which was contained in the parable. For to hear the word of God is an absolute necessity for salvation, as the Apostle indicates: How

shall they believe in him (Jesus) of whom they have not heard? (*Rom.* x. 14.) And Jesus praises those happy ones who hear the word of God and keep it. (*Luke* xi. 28.) And on this subject St. Augustine says: "Be assured, my brethren, that as the body becomes weakened by want and hunger, and wastes to a mere shadow, so the soul that is not nourished by the word of God, becomes shrunken, worthless, and unfit for any good work."

Whence comes so much evil cockle, when the seed of God's word is so abundantly sown?

Because, as Christ says, the seed falls now by the wayside, now upon a rock, now among thorns, seldom upon good soil, this is to say, those who hear the word of God are as a highway, over which many distracted thoughts are travelling which tread down the scattered seed, or, like fowls of the air devour it, or they are like rocks, hardened by their prejudices or repeated crimes, so that the divine word cannot take root; or, again, they are so overgrown by the thorns of worldly cares, the constant desire for wealth and riches and sensual delights, that even if they receive the seed, it is unable to grow and bear fruit.

ON THE STRENGTH OF GOD'S WORD.

THE word of God is compared, by the Prophet Jeremias, to a hammer which crushes hearts as hard as rocks, and to a fire that dries up the swamps of vice, and consumes the inveterate evil habits. (*Jer.* xxiii. 29.) The Psalmist compares it to thunder that makes all tremble, a storm-wind that bends and breaks the cedars of Libanon, that is, proud and obstinate spirits; a light that dispels the darkness of ignorance; and a remedy that cures sin. (*Ps.* xxviii. 3. 5., cxviii., cv., *and* cxxix. 11.) St. Paul compares it to a sword that divides the body from the soul, that is, the carnal desires from the spirit (*Hebr.* iv. 12.); the Apostle James to a mirror in which man sees his stains and his wrongs. (*Jam.* i. 23.) The Prophet Isaias to a precious rain that moistens the soil of the soul and fertilizes it (*Isai.* lv. 10. 11.); and Jesus Himself compares it to a seed that when it falls on good ground, brings forth fruit an hundredfold. (*Luke* viii. 8.) One single grain of this divine seed produced the most marvellous fruits of sanctity in St. Augustine, St. Anthony the Great, in St. Nicholas of Tolentino, and others; for St. Augustine was converted by the words: "Let us walk honestly as in the day: not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and envy." (*Rom.* xiii. 13.) St. Anthony by the words: "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and, come, follow me." (*Matt.* xxi. 15.) Nicholas of Tolentino was brought to Christian perfection by the words: "Love not the world, nor those things which are in the world." (i. *John* ii. 15.)

How should we prepare ourselves to be benefitted by the word of God?

We must be good, well tilled soil, that is, we must have a heart that loves truth, desires to learn, and humbly and sincerely seeks salvation; we must listen to the word of God with due preparation and attention, keep the divine truths we have heard, in our heart, frequently consider, and strive to fulfil them.

What should be done before the sermon?

We should endeavor to purify our conscience, for, as St. Chrysostom demands: "Who would pour precious juice into a vessel that is not clean, without first washing it?" We should, therefore, at least cleanse our hearts by an ardent sorrow for our sins, because the spirit of truth enters not into the sinful soul (*Wis.* i. 4.); we should ask the Holy Ghost for the necessary enlightenment, for little or no fruit can be obtained from a sermon if it is not united with prayer; we should listen to the sermon with a good motive, that is, with a view to hearing some thing edifying and instructive; if we listen to a sermon only from curiosity, the desire to hear something new, to criticize the preacher, or to see and to be seen, we are like the Pharisees who for such and similar motives went to hear Christ, and derived no benefit therefrom. "As a straight sword goes not into a crooked sheath, so the word of God enters not into a heart that is filled with improper motives;" we should strive to direct our minds rightly, that is, to dispel all temporal thoughts, all needless distraction, otherwise the wholesome words would fall but upon the ears, would not penetrate the heart, and the words of Christ be fulfilled: They have ears, and hear not.

How should we comport ourselves during the sermon?

We should listen to the sermon with earnest, reverent attention, for God speaks to us through the preachers, and Christ says to them: Who hears you, hears me. (*Luke* x. 6.) We must listen to the preachers, therefore, not as to men, but as to God's ambassadors, for every preacher can say with St. Paul: We are ambassadors for Christ, God, as it were, exhorting by us. (ii. *Cor.* v. 20.) "If," says St. Chrysostom, "when the letter of a king is read, the greatest quiet and attention prevail, that nothing the king's letter contains, may be lost, how much more should we listen with reverence and perfect silence to the word of God?" The word of God is, and ever will be, a divine seed, which, when properly received, produces precious fruit, by whomsoever sowed; for in the sowing it matters not who sows, but what soil is sowed. Be careful, also, that you do not apply that which is said, to others, but take it to yourself, or the sermon will be of no benefit for you. Are you free from those vices which the preacher decries and against which he battles? then, thank God, but do not despice

others who are perhaps laboring under them, rather pray, that they may be released and you preserved from falling into them. Keep also from sleeping, talking, and other extravagances, and remember, that whoever is of God, also willingly hears his word. (*John* viii. 47.)

What should be done after the sermon?

We should then strive to put into action the good we have heard, for God justifies not those who hear the law, but those who keep it (*Rom.* ii. 13.), and those who hear the word of God and do not conform their lives to it, are like the man who looks in the glass, and having looked in the glass goes away and presently forgets what manner of man he is. (*Jam.* i. 23. 24.) To practise that which has been heard, it is above all necessary, that it should be kept constantly in mind, and thoughtfully considered. St. Bernard says: "Preserve the word of God as you would your body's meat, for it is a life giving bread, and the food of your soul." Happy those, says Christ, who keep it. Receive it, therefore, into your soul's interior, and let it reach your morals, and your actions.

That food which cannot be digested, or is at once thrown out, is useless; the food should be well masticated, retained, and by the digestive powers worked up into good blood. So, not only on the day, but often during the week, that which was heard in the sermon, should be thought of, whether it has already been, or if it can and will be now put into practice. Speak of it to others, thus will much idle talk be saved, many souls with the grace of God roused to good, and enlightened in regard to the evil they had not before seen in themselves, and kept from it; let us hear others speak of the sermon, and especially should heads of families require their children and domestics to tell about it; let us also particularly entreat God to give us grace, that we may be enabled to practise the precepts given us.

PRAYER. How much am I shamed, O my God, that the seed of Thy divine word, which Thou hast sowed so often and so abundantly in my heart, has brought forth so little fruit! Ah! have mercy on me, and so change my heart, that it may become good soil, in which Thy word may take root, grow without hinderance, and finally bring forth fruits of salvation. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

The Introit of this day's Mass is the sigh of an afflicted, but in God confiding soul: Be thou unto me a God, a protector, and a house of refuge to save me, for thou art my strength, and my refuge; and for thy name's sake thou wilt lead me, and nourish me. (*Ps.* xxx. 34.) In thee, O Lord, have I hoped, let me never be confounded; deliver me in thy justice and rescue me. (*Ps.* xxx. 2.)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Hear our prayer, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that being freed from the claims of our sins, we may be preserved from all adversity. Through our Lord, &c.

EPISTLE. (i. *Cor.* xiii. 1—13.) Brethren: If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And if I should have prophecy, and should know all mysteries, and all knowledge, and if I should have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity is patient, is kind: Charity envieth not, dealeth not perversely: it is not puffed up, it is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth: beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never falleth away: whether prophecies shall be made void, or tongues shall cease, or knowledge shall be destroyed. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child. But when I became a man, I put away the things of a child. We now see through a glass in a dark manner; but then face to face. Now I know in part: but then I shall know, even as I am known. And now

there remain faith, hope, charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity.

EXPLANATION. In this epistle St. Paul speaks of the necessity, the excellence, and the nature of true charity. He says, that all natural and supernatural gifts, all good works, even martyrdom, do not avail to salvation, if they are not united and animated by the love of God; because that love alone can render our works pleasing to Him. Therefore, though ever so much good is accomplished, so many alms given, prayers, fasting, and good deeds performed but not for love of God, or while not in the state of grace, no reward in heaven can be hoped for. Strive then, O Christian soul, to lead always a pious life in love, and to remain always in a state of grace.

Can faith alone, as the reformers assert, render man just, and save him?

Faith alone, however strong, though it could move mountains, without love, that is, without good works performed for love of God and our neighbor, can never justify or save us. For, when St. Paul says, that man is justified by faith without works (*Rom* iii. 28.; xi. 6.; *Eph.* ii. 8.), he means to refer to those works which were done by command of the law of Moses, and which, as they were external and without true charity, were of no avail; he did not refer to those works which are performed in a state of grace with a living, love-inspired faith. Thus the same apostle writes to the Galatians (*Gal.* v. 6.), that faith only availeth which worketh by charity; to Titus (*Tit.* iii. 8.): It is a faithful saying: and these things I will have thee affirm to the faithful constantly: that they, who believe in God, may be careful to excel in good works. These things are good and profitable unto men; and he exhorts the Colossians (*Colos.* i. 10.) to be fruitful in every good work. This St. James confirms who writes (*James* ii. 17. 24.): So faith if it have not works, is dead in itself; by works man is justified and not by faith only. That this is the true doctrine of Christ, is evident from His own words, when He says: "Every tree that yieldeth not good fruit, shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire." (*Matt.* vii. 19.) At the day of judgment Christ will demand good works of all men (*Matt.* xxv. 35.), and will not judge them only according to their faith, but by their good works, which true faith must always produce. (*Apoc.* xx. 12.; *Eccl.* xxxii. 24.) Would Christ and His apostles demand good works, if faith alone would suffice? "The devils also believe and tremble" (*James* ii. 19.), they believe, but they are not saved, and their faith but increases their torments. Therefore, the assertion that faith without good works is sufficient for justification and salvation, is plainly against the

doctrine of Christ and His Church, and must of necessity lead man to the greatest debaucheries, as is shown by the unhappy separation of the sixteenth century.

Are good works performed while in a state of mortal sin available?

Good works performed while in a state of mortal sin, avail nothing in regard to eternal life, writes St. Lawrence Justinian, but aid in moderating the punishment imposed for disobedience and the transgression of God's commandments. They give temporal goods, such as honor, long life, health, earthly happiness, etc.; they prevent from falling deeper into sin, and prepare the heart for the reception of grace; so the pious Gerson writes: "Do as much good as you can even though in the state of mortal sin, that God may give light to your heart."

ASPIRATION. O God of love, pour the spirit of true charity into my heart, that, as taught by St. Paul, I may endeavor to be always in a state of grace, that all my works may be pleasing to Thee, and meritorious for me.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xviii. 31—43.) At that time: Jesus took to him the twelve, and said to them: Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things shall be accomplished which were written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man. For he shall be delivered to the gentiles, and shall be mocked, and scourged, and spit upon: and after they have scourged him, they will put him to death, and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things, and this word was hid from them, and they understood not the things that were said. Now it came to pass, that when he drew nigh to Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the wayside, begging. And when he heard the multitude passing by, he asked what this meant. And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out, saying: Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me. And they that went before, rebuked him, that he should hold his peace. But he cried out much more: Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus standing, commanded him to be brought unto him. And when he was come near, he asked him, saying: What wilt thou that I do to thee? But he said: Lord, that I may see. And Jesus said to him: Receive thy sight: thy faith

hath made thee whole. And immediately he saw, and followed him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

Why did Christ so often foretell His passion to His disciples?

Because of His great desire to suffer for us, for we speak often of that which we desire; and because He wished, that His disciples when they shou d see Him, later, treated as a criminal and martyred, would not think evil of Him, or imagine themselves deceived, but remember, that He had foretold all, minutely, that all happened of His own will, and hence they would not be cast down.

Did not the disciples understand anything of that which He told of His future sufferings?

They may, certainly, have well understood He was to suffer, for which reason Peter tried to keep Him from it (*Matt.* xvi. 22.); but they did not comprehend why or for what He would suffer, or how He would rise again. All this the Holy Ghost gave them to understand, after it had come to pass. (*John* xvi. 26.) The light of the Holy Ghost is of so much value, that without it even the clearest doctrines taught by faith, are not understood.

Why here, as in other places, does Christ speak of Himself as the Son of Man?

He wished to show, in the Jews' way of speaking, He was also man, a descendant of Adam, that we should be humble, and not look for high titles.

Why did the blind man call Christ the Son of David?

Because, like all the Jews, he believed that the Messiah, according to humanity, would be of the house of David, as was promised. (*Ps.* cxxxi. 11.)

Why did Christ ask the blind man: What wilt thou that I do to thee?

This He asked, not because He was unaware of the blind man's wish, but to enable him to better show his faith and hope, that through Christ he would receive his sight; and that He might show us how He loves to do good to us, and how it pleases Him if we trustfully place our wants before Him. We should learn from this blind man who would not be restrained by the passing crowd, in his ardent and reiterated request, not to pay attention, in the work we have commenced, to human respect, or human judgment, but to persevere, and not allow ourselves to be led astray by the world's mockery or contempt. We should also learn to thank God, and faithfully cling to Him, if He has once opened the eyes of our mind, and healed our spiritual blindness, which is far more deplorable than physical blindness, for nothing can be more miserable than not to see and understand God, ourselves, what is necessary for our salvation, and what is pernicious to it.

Why is this gospel read on this Sunday?

The Church wishes to remind us of the painful passion and death of Jesus, and so impress us by the contemplation, that we may avoid and despise the wicked, heathenish amusements of the carnival, sinful pleasures which the Church has always condemned, because they come from dark paganism, and, to detain the people from them, commands, that during the three days of the carnival the Blessed Sacrament shall be exposed for public adoration, sermons given, and the faithful exhorted, to have recourse at this time to the Sacraments of Penance and of the Altar, with the

reception of which Pope Clement xiiii. *(Breve, 23. June 1765)* connects a plenary indulgence. A true Catholic will conform to the desire of his holy Church, considering the words St. Augustine spoke, at this time, to the faithful, "The heathens (as also the worldly people of our days) shout songs of love and merriment, but you should delight in the preaching of the word of God; they rush to the dramatic plays, but you should hasten to Church; they are intoxicated, but you should be sober and fast."

PRAYER. O most benign Jesus! who didst so desire to suffer for us, grant, that we may willingly suffer for love of Thee; that we may hate and fly from the detestable pleasures of the world and the flesh, and practise penance and mortification, that by so doing we may merit to be released from our soul-blindness, to love Thee more and more ardently, and finally possess Thee forever.

INSTRUCTION FOR LENT.

Who instituted Lent?

According to the fathers of the Church, Justinus and Irenaeus, the fast before Easter was instituted and sanctified by Christ Himself; according to the saints Leo and Jerome, the holy apostles ordained it after Jesus' example.

Why is the fast required, and why for forty days before Easter?

In imitation of Christ's forty days' fast for us; to participate in the fasting and sufferings of Christ, by voluntary mortification, as did St. Paul, who sought thus to fill up what was wanting of the sufferings of Christ (*Col.* i. 24.); that we may subject our flesh to the spirit, and mortify our evil desires; that we may lead a pure life, and thus prepare for the holy festival of Easter, and the reception of the divine Lamb, Jesus; and, finally, that we may render God satisfaction for our sins, and do penance, as Pope Gregory says, by one short fast, lasting for only the tenth part of a year, for the sins of one whole year.

Was fasting observed in old times as well as in the present?

Yes, but much more strictly; for the people then not only abstained from meat, as now, but also from all that which is connected with it, such as: eggs, butter, cheese, &c., even from wine and fish, although this was not the general command of the Church; they fasted all day, and only ate in the evening after vespers, in remembrance of which, vespers are now said before dinner-time, because the Church, as a kind mother, now permits the supper to be changed into a dinner, and also allows something

to be taken in the evening, that the body may not be too much weakened, and unfitted for labor.

How much does this ancient custom shame the Christians of to-day who think the fast in our times too strict! "But," asks St. Ambrose, "what sort of Christians are they? Christ, who never sinned, fasted for our sins, and we will not fast for our own great and numerous sins?"

How should the holy season of Lent be spent?

As according to the teaching of St. Leo, the main thing in fasting is not the abstinence from food, which is unavailingly kept from the body, if the mind is not at the same time withdrawn from wickedness, we should strive during Lent, not only to be temperate in eating and drinking, but especially to lead a modest life, sanctifying the days by persevering prayer and devoutly attending church.

PRAYER FOR THE BEGINNING OF LENT.

Almighty God! I unite myself at the beginning of this holy season of penance with the Church militant, endeavoring to make these really days of sorrow for my sins and crucifixion of the sensual man. O Lord Jesus! in union with Thy fasting and passion, I offer Thee my fasting in obedience to the Church, for Thy honor, and in thanksgiving for the many favors I have received, in satisfaction for mine and others' sins, and that I may receive the grace to avoid such and such a sin, and to practise such and such a virtue.

INSTRUCTION FOR ASH-WEDNESDAY.

Why is this day thus named?

Because on this day the Church blesses ashes, and places them on the heads of her faithful children, with the words: "Remember, man, thou art dust, and unto dust thou shalt return."

Why is this done?

St. Charles Borromeo gives us the following reasons for this practice: that the faithful may be moved to the heart's sincere humility; that the heavenly blessing may descend upon them, by which they, being really penitent, will weep with their whole soul for their sins, remembering how earth was cursed because of sin, and we thus have all to return to the dust of earth; that strength to do true penance may be given the body; and that our soul may be endowed with divine force to persevere in penance.

With such thoughts let the ashes be put upon your head, while you ask in all humility and with a contrite heart, for God's mercy and grace.

Does it please God, that for such reasons, ashes should be put upon our heads?

It does, for God Himself commanded the Israelits to put ashes on themselves for a sign of repentance. (*Jer.* xxv. 34.) Thus did David (*Ps.* ci. 10.) who even strewed ashes on his bread; the Ninivites (*Jonas* iii. 5.), Judith (*Jud.* ix.), Mardochai (*Esth.* iv.), Job (*Job* xlii. 6.), &c. The Christians of the earliest times followed this practice as often as they did public penance for their sins.

Why from this day until the end of Lent, are the altars draped in violet?

Because, as has been already said, the holy season of Lent is a time of sorrow and penance for sin, and the Church desires externally to demonstrate, by the violet with which she drapes the altar, by the violet vestments worn by the priests, and by the cessation of the organ and festive singing, that we in quiet mourning are bewailing our sins; and to still further impress the spirit of penance upon us, there is usually only a simple crucifix or a picture from Christ's passion, left visible upon the altar, and devoutly gazing it, the heart is generally prepared for contrition.

In the Introit of this day's Mass the Church uses the following words by which to make known her zeal for penance, and to move God to mercy: Thou, o Lord, hast mercy on all, and hatest none of those things, which thou hast created; thou winkest at the sins of men, to draw them to repentance, and thou pardonest them; because thou art the Lord our God. (*Wis.* xi. 24.-25.) Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me; for my soul trusteth in thee. (*Ps.* lvi. 2.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, o Lord, that Thy faithful may enter on this solemn fast with suitable piety, and go through it for the benefit of their salvation. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, &c.

LESSON. (*Joel* ii. 12—19.) Thus saith the Lord: Be converted to me with all your heart, in fasting, in weeping, and in mourning. And rend your hearts, and not your garments, and turn to the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, patient and rich in mercy, and ready to repent of the evil. Who knoweth but he will return, and forgive, and leave a blessing behind him, sacrifice and libation to the Lord your God? Blow the trumpet in Sion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather together the people,

sanctify the Church, assemble the ancients, gather together the little ones and them that suck at the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth from his bed, and the bride out of the bride-chamber. Between the porch and the altar the priests, the Lord's ministers, shall weep and shall say: Spare, O Lord, spare thy people: and give not thine inheritance to reproach, that the heathens should rule over them. Why should they say among the nations: Where is their God? The Lord hath been zealous for his land, and hath spared his people. And the Lord answered and said to his people: Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, you shall be filled with them: and I will no more make you a reproach among the nations: saith the Lord Almighty.

EXPLANATION. The Prophet Joel exhorts the Jews to sorrow and penance for their sins, that they might evade the expected judgment to be sent by God upon the city of Jerusalem. He required of them to show their repentance not merely by rending their garments, a sign of mourning with the Jews, but by a truly contrite heart. By this lesson from the prophet, the Church wishes, we should see plainly what qualities our penance should possess, if we desire reconciliation with God, forgiveness of our sins, and delivrance at the Last Day, which qualities are not merely abstinence from food and amusements, but the practice of real mortification of our evil inclinations, thus becoming with our whole heart converted to God.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* vi. 16—21.) AT THAT TIME: Jesus said to his disciples: When you fast be not as the hypocrites, sad. For they disfigure their faces, that they may appear to men to fast. Amen I say to you, they have received their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face: that thou appear not to men to fast, but to thy Father, who is in secret: and thy Father, who seeth in secret, will reward thee. Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth: where the rust and moth consume, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven: where neither rust nor moth doth consume, and where thieves do no break through, nor steal. For where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also.

EXPLANATION. Jesus forbids us to look for the praises of men, when performing good works, of which the fast is one, and

that which is still worse, to do good, as the Pharisees, from hypocrisy. He also warns us against avarice and the desire for temporal riches, urging us to employ our temporal goods, in giving alms, and doing works of charity, thus laying up treasures of meritorious deeds in heaven, which are there rewarded and will last there forever. "What folly," says St. Chrysostom, "to leave our goods where we cannot stay, instead of sending them before us where we are going—to heaven!"

THURSDAY AFTER ASH-WEDNESDAY.

LESSON. (*Isai.* xxxviii. 1—6.) In those days Ezechias was sick even to death, and Isaias the son of Amos the prophet came unto him, and said to him: Thus saith the Lord: Take order with thy house for thou shalt die, and not live. And Ezechias turned his face towards the wall, and prayed to the Lord, and said: I beseech thee, O Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Ezechias wept with great weeping. And the word of the Lord came to Isaias, saying: Go and say to Ezechias: Thus saith the Lord the God of David thy father: I have heard thy prayer, and I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add to thy days fifteen years: And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hands of the king of the Assyrians, and I will protect it, saith the Lord Almighty.

EXPLANATION. In the fourteenth year of his reign, death, by the command of the Lord, was announced by the Prophet Isaias to Ezechias, King of Juda, and he, no longer young, turned confidently to God, and asked that his life might be prolonged, which was granted.

The Church by this exhorts us, by a pious life and by fervent prayer to be ready for death, that we may receive, if not the prolongation of our temporal life, eternal life.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* viii. 5—13.)

[See this gospel, commencing with the words: "And when he had entered into Capharnaum," and its explanation in the instruction for the third Sunday after Epiphany.]

PETITION. Teach me, O Lord, to love my neighbor, as did this centurion, and grant me Thy grace, that I may imitate his great humility, and always as confidently as he believe in Thee, and trust Thy power and goodness.

FRIDAY AFTER ASH-WEDNESDAY.

LESSON. (*Isai.* lviii. 1—9.) Thus saith the Lord God: Cry, cease not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their wicked doings, and the house of Jacob their sins. For they seek me from day to day, and desire to know my ways, as a nation that hath done justice, and hath not forsaken the judgment of their God: they ask of me the judgments of justice: they are willing to approach to God. Why have we fasted, and thou hast not regarded: why have we humbled our souls, and thou hast not taken notice? Behold, in the day of your fast, your own will is found, and you exact of all your debtors. Behold, you fast for debates and strife, and strike with the fist wickedly. Do not fast as you have done until this day, to make your cry to be heard on high. Is this such a fast, as I have chosen: for a man to afflict his soul for a day? is this it, to wind his head about like a circle, and to spread sackcloth and ashes? wilt thou call this a fast, and a day acceptable to the Lord? Is not this rather the fast that I have chosen? loose the bands of wickedness, undo the bundles that oppress, let them that are broken go free, and break asunder every burden. Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the needy and the harbourless into thy house: when thou shalt see one naked, cover him, and despise not thy own flesh. Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy health shall speedily arise, and thy justice shall go before thy face, and the glory of the Lord shall gather thee up. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall hear: thou shalt cry, and he shall say; Here I am, for I the Lord thy God am merciful.

EXPLANATION. Of the true fast such as God, through the prophet, demands, St. Bernard writes: "If only the tickling of the palate has sinned, let it fast, it is enough; but since all the members of the body have sinned as well, why should they not also fast? The eye should, therefore, abstain from all vain and curious sights; the ears from listening to idle talk and tales; the tongue from all detraction and frivolous words; but far more let the soul abstain from all sin and evil pleasures. Without this fast the Lord reproves all others, as it is written: Behold, on the day of your fast, your own will is found, that is, you fast as it pleases you, not as God requires."

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* v. 43—48.; vi. 1—4.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: You have heard that it hath been said: Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thy enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies, do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you: that you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven, who maketh his sun to rise upon the good and bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust. For if you love them that love you, what reward shall you have? do not even the publicans the same? And if you salute your brethren only, what do you do more? do not also the heathens the same? Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect. Take heed that you do not your justice before men, to be seen by them: otherwise you shall not have a reward of your Father who is in heaven. Therefore when thou dost an alms deed, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honoured by men. Amen I say to you they have received their reward. But when thou dost alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth. That thy alms may be in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret, will repay thee.

EXPLANATION. In regard to the loving of our enemies which Christ so emphatically enforces in this day's gospel, St. Chrysostom gives nine degrees or steps, when he says: "The first degree in loving your enemy is, that you do not begin the enmity; the second, that you do not continue it in the same way, after it has begun; the third, that you repay not like for like, but that you yield; the fourth, that you advance yourself to bear the insult; the fifth, that you yourself offer more than the offender demands; the sixth, that you do not hate him by whom you suffer; the seventh, that you love him who offends you; the eighth, that you willingly bestow benefits upon him; the ninth, that you even pray to God for your enemy. Do this and you will follow Jesus, who even on the cross loved His enemies and prayed for them."

SATURDAY AFTER ASH-WEDNESDAY.

LESSON. (*Isai.* lviii. 9—14.) Thus saith the Lord God: If thou wilt take away the chain out of the midst of thee,

and cease to stretch out the finger, and to speak that which is good for nothing. When thou shalt pour out thy soul to the hungry, and shalt satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise up in darkness, and thy darkness shall be as the noonday. And the Lord will give thee rest continually, and will fill thy soul with brightness, and deliver thy bones, and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a fountain of water, whose waters shall not fail. And the places that have been desolate for ages, shall be built in thee: thou shalt raise up the foundations of generation and generation: and thou shalt be called the repairer of the fences, turning the paths into rest. If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy own will in my holy day, and call the sabbath delightful, and the holy of the Lord glorious, and glorify him, while thou dost not thy own ways, and thy own will is not found, to speak a word: Then shalt thou be delighted in the Lord, and I will lift thee up above the high places of the earth, and will feed thee with the inheritance of Jacob thy father. For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

EXPLANATION. In this lesson God promises peace and happiness to those who keep from usury, which is understood by the chain, by which the rich bind the poor, and who are peaceful, practise silence, and aid the poor in their needs; He likewise promises abundance of blessing to those who celebrate the Lord's festivals with due devotion and sanctity.

Let us learn from these words to be at peace with all men, to subdue our tongues, to exercise mercy towards those in want, and to celebrate the days of the Lord with sacred joy, and deep reverence, that glorious reward may be ours here and hereafter.

GOSPEL. (*Mark.* vi. 47—56.) At that time: When it was late, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and himself alone on the land. And seeing them labouring in rowing (for the wind was against them) and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh to them walking upon the sea, and he would have passed by them. But they seeing him walking upon the sea, thought it was an apparition, and they cried out. For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he spoke with them, and said to them: Have a good heart, it is I, fear ye not. And he went up to them into the ship, and the wind ceased. And they were far more aston-

ished within themselves: for they understood not concerning the loaves: for their heart was blinded. And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Genesareth, and set to the shore. And when they were gone out of the ship, immediately they knew him; and running through that whole country, they began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was. And whithersoever he entered, into towns, or into villages, or cities, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch but the hem of his garment: and as many as touched him, were made whole.

EXPLANATION. Three things we have to consider in this gospel: The omnipotence of Jesus, the impotence of man; the apostles and disciples had been the whole night on the sea, unable to reach the shore; in the morning, at the fourth watch of the night, Jesus is seen coming, walking on the waves, the wind ceases, and the ship speeds to the shore; — and the blindness of the disciples, who, the day before, had seen Jesus feed many thousands of men with a few loaves of bread, and yet could not see, that the Lord, omnipotent in all things, could also walk upon the waves of the sea.

From this we learn the need we have of God's assistance and of His light, and let us often cry in our wants and temptations: "Send us light and strength, O Lord, that we may happily reach the shore of the heavenly fatherland!"

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT, called INVOCABIT.

THis Sunday is called Invocabit, because the Introit of the Mass begins with this word, which is taken from the ninetieth psalm, wherein we are urged to confidence in God, who willingly hears the prayer of the penitent: He shall cry to me, and I will hear him: I will deliver him and I will glorify him: I will fill him with length of days. (*Ps.* lxc. 15. 16.) He that dwelleth in the aid of the Most High, shall abide under the protection of the God of heaven. (*Ps.* lxc. 1) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, wo dost purify Thy Church by the annual observance of Lent; grant, that what

Thy children strive to obtain of Thee by abstinence, they may secure by good works. Through our Lord, &c.

EPISTLE. (ii. *Cor.* vi. 1—10.) Brethren: We exhort you, that you receive not the grace of God in vain. For he saith: "In an acceptable time have I heard thee; and in the day of salvation have I helped thee." Behold, now is the acceptable time: behold, now is the day of salvation. Giving no offence to any man, that our ministry be not blamed: but in all things let us exhibit ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in tribulation, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in prison, in seditions, in labours, in watchings, in fastings, in chastity, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in sweetness, in the Holy Ghost, in charity unfeigned, in the word of truth, in the power of God; by the armour of justice on the right-hand, and on the left: by honour, and dishonour: by evil report, and good report: as deceivers, and yet true: as unknown, and yet known: as dying, and behold we live: as chastised, and not killed: as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing: as needy, yet enriching many: as having nothing, and possessing all things.

EXPLANATION. The Church very appropriately has read on this day this epistle of St. Paul, in which he exhorts the Christians to make use of the time of grace. A special time of grace is Lent, in which everything invites to conversion and penance, a time, therefore, in which God is ready to make rich bestowal of His graces. As St. Anselm says, those do not use the grace who do not cooperate with it. Let us, therefore, follow St. Paul's example, and earnestly practise those virtues he places before us, and especially those of temperance, patience, chastity, liberality, love of God and of our neighbor. Let us arm ourselves with the arms of justice at the right and the left, that is, let us strive to be humble in prosperity, in adversity trustful of God's help. Let us be never led from the path of virtue, by mockery, contempt, nor by persecution, by torments, or death.

ASPIRATION. Grant, O Jesus, that we may always faithfully cooperate with Thy graces, and well employ the time Thou hast again given for our salvation.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* iv. 1—11.) At that time: Jesus was led by the spirit into the desert, to be tempted by the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterwards hungry. And the tempter coming, said to him:

If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said: It is written, "Not by bread alone doth man live, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Then the devil took him into the holy city, and set him upon a pinnacle of the temple, and said to him: If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written: "He hath given his angels charge over thee, and in their hands shall they bear thee up, lest perhaps thou dash thy foot against a stone." Jesus said to him: It is written again, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Again the devil took him up into a very high mount-

ain, and shewed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and said to him: All these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and adore me. Then Jesus said to him: Begone, Satan: for it is written: "The Lord thy God shalt thou adore, and him only shalt thou serve." Then the devil left him; and behold, angels came and ministered to him.

INSTRUCTION. I. Christ went into the desert by inspiration of the Holy Ghost to prepare by fasting and prayer, for His mission of preacher, and to endure the temptations of Satan, that, as St. Paul says, He might be one tempted in all things like as we are, without sin, and so become for us a Highpriest who knew how to have compassion on our infirmities (*Hebr.* iv. 15.), and to show us by His own example, how we should, armed with the word of God, as with a sword, overcome the tempter. (*Eph.* vi. 17.)—Let us, therefore, courageously follow Christ to the combat against all temptations, with His assistance it will not be hard to conquer them. He has certainly taught us to overcome the hardest ones: the lust of the eyes, of the flesh, and the pride of life, and if we overcome these, it will be easy to conquer the rest.

II. If Christ, the only Son of God, permitted Himself to be tempted by Satan, even, taken up a high mountain, and to the pinnacle of the temple, it should not appear strange to us, that we are assailed by many temptations, or that we should find in the lives of so many saints, that the evil spirit tormented them by various images of terror and vexation. This we find in the history of the pious Job, where we also find at the same time, that the evil spirit cannot bend a hair of our head without God's permission.

III. From the coming of the angels to minister to Christ, after He had conquered Satan, we see that all who bravely resist temptations, will enjoy the assistance and consolations of the beloved angels.

DOCTRINAL AND MORAL INSTRUCTION ON TEMPTATIONS.

To be tempted by the devil. (*Matt.* iv. 1.)

What is a temptation?

A Temptation is either a trial for instruction and exercise in virtue, or a deception and incitement to sin. In the first sense God tempts man, in the second the devil, the world or bad people, and the flesh, by evil thoughts, feelings, words, or works.

Through what are we principally tempted?

By our own evil concupiscence and inclination to sin which adhere to us through original sin (*Jam.* i. 14.), on account of which

it is said, that the flesh lusteth against the spirit. (*Gal.* v. 17.)

Does the devil also tempt us?

He does, and is therefore called, in this day's gospel, the tempter. St. Peter teaches us this, having himself experienced it: Be sober and watch, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour. (i. *Peter* v. 8.) Not all temptations are to be ascribed to the devil, however, but often come from our own corrupted nature, our own incautiousness, or looseness of our senses, by which we expose ourselves to the danger of falling into sin.

How does the devil tempt us to sin?

In a twofold manner: He incites the concupiscence of man to those sins to which he sees him inclined, and then seeks so to blind and confuse his imagination, that he neither reflects, nor properly sees the temporal injury, disgrace, and derision, nor the shamefulness of sin and its eternal punishment, but throws himself into it. Thus the devil seduced Eve, our first mother, and thus he tempted Christ, with whom he could not, of course, succeed, for He was incapable of sin. He tempts bad people to persecute us, or to tempt us by their wicked vanities, as he did with the friends of Job.

Can the devil force us to evil?

He cannot; "for as a chained dog," says St. Augustine, "can bite none but those who go near him, so the devil cannot harm with his temptations those who do not consent to them. Like the dog he can bark at you, but cannot bite you against your will." Not by force but by persuasion Satan strives to injure, he does not force our consent, but entreats it. Seek, therefore, to subdue your passions and your senses, especially your eyes, and you will either remain free from all temptations, or easily overcome them.

Does God also tempt us?

God does indeed tempt us, but not to sin, as St. James expressly teaches. (*Jam.* i. 13.) God either Himself proves us by sufferings and adversities, or He permits the temptations of the devil or evil minded people to come upon us, to give us opportunity to practise the virtues of love, patience, obedience, etc. Thus He said to the Jews through Moses: The Lord, your God, trieth you, that it may appear, whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul, or not. (*Deut.* xiii. 3.)

Does God permit us to be tempted by man also?

He does, and for the same reasons. Thus He permitted the chaste Joseph to be tempted by Potiphar's wife (*Gen.* xxxix. 7.); Job by his wife and his friends. (*Job* ii. 9.) But He never permits us to be tempted beyond our strength, but gives us always suf-

ficient grace to overcome and even gain benefit from the temptation. (i. *Cor.* x. 13.)

Are the temptations pernicious and bad?

No; they are useful and necessary, rather. "Hard is the fight," St. Bernard writes, "but meritorious, for although it is accompanied by suffering, it is followed by the crown" (*Apoc.* ii. 12.); and Origen says (*Libr. Num.*), "As meat becomes corrupt without salt, so does the soul without temptations." Temptations, then, are only injurious when consent is given, and we suffer ourselves to be overcome by them.

When is consent given to temptations?

No sooner than we consciously and voluntarily decide to do the evil to which we are tempted; so long as we resist it, and feel an aversion for it, so long we do not consent, and commit no sin.

What are the best means of overcoming temptations?

Humility is one; for thus answered St. Anthony, when he saw the whole earth covered with snares, and was asked, "Who will escape?" "The humble;" he who knows his own frailty, distrusts himself, and relies only on God, who resists the proud and gives His grace to the humble (*Jam.* iv. 6.); other means are: the fervent invocation of the Mother of God, of our holy guardian angel, and patron saints; the pronouncing of the holy name of Jesus, making the sign of the cross, sprinkling holy water; the remembrance of the presence of God, who knows our most secret thoughts, and before whom we are indeed ashamed to think or do that which would cause us shame in the presence of an honorable person; frequent meditation on death, hell, and eternal joys; flying from all those persons and places by whom and in which we are generally tempted; fervent prayers, especially socalled ejaculations as: "Lord, save me, I perish! Lord, hasten to help me!" finally, the sincere acknowledgment of our temptations at the tribunal of penance, which is a remedy especially advised by pious spiritual teachers.

PRAYER. O Lord Jesus! who spent forty days in the desert without food or drink, and didst permit Thyself, besides, to be tempted by the evil spirit, give me, I beseech Thee by that holy fast, the grace to combat, during this holy season of Lent, under Thy protection, against intemperance, and to resist the suggestions of Satan, that I may win the crown of eternal life. Amen.

MONDAY IN THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Ezek.* xxxiv. 11—16.) Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I myself will seek my sheep, and will visit them.

As the shepherd visiteth his flock, in the day when he shall be in the midst of his sheep that were scattered: so will I visit my sheep, and will deliver them out of all the places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the peoples, and will gather them out of the countries, and will bring them to their own land: and I will feed them in the mountains of Israel, by the rivers, and in all the habitations of the land: I will feed them in the most fruitful pastures, and their pastures shall be in the high mountains of Israel: there shall they rest on the green grass, and be fed in fat pastures upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my sheep: and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost: and that which was driven away, I will bring again: and I will bind up that which was broken, and I will strengthen that which was weak, and that which was fat and strong, I will preserve: and I will feed them in judgment, saith the Lord Almighty.

EXPLANATION. After these words to the Jews, to whom God promised, that He would free them from Babylonian captivity, and then pasture and protect them like a good pastor, the prophet describes, in a higher sense, the time when all nations will be united under one shepherd, namely Christ Jesus, in one sheepfold. These words may be applied, at the same time, to a soul, that by a true conversion has been released by the Good Shepherd Jesus, who has everywhere followed it, from the power of Satan, and is now carefully nourished, by Him, by His word and His blessed Sacraments, and filled with heavenly consolations. — O Christian, who, perhaps, hast strayed away by sin from Jesus, the Good Shepherd, hasten back to Him in sorrow; with joy He will receive you, and present you His love!

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxv. 31—46.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: When the Son of Man shall come in his majesty, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit upon the seat of his majesty. And all nations shall be gathered together before him, and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left. Then shall the king say to them that shall be on his right hand: Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink: I was a stranger, and you took me in: naked, and you clothed me: sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came to me. Then shall the just answer him, saying: Lord, when did we see thee hungry, and feed thee: thirsty, and gave thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger, and took thee in: or naked, and clothed thee? Or when did we see thee sick or in prison, and came to thee? And the king answering, shall say to them: Amen I say to you, as long as you have done it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me. Then shall he say to them also that shall be on his left hand: Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry, and you gave me not to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me not to drink. I was a stranger, and you took me not in: naked, and you clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and you did not visit me. Then shall they also answer him, saying: Lord, when did we see thee hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison and did not minister to thee? Then he shall answer them, saying: Amen I say to you, as long as you did it not to one of these least ones, neither did you it to me. And these shall go into everlasting punishment, but the just into life everlasting.

EXPLANATION. From the words of this gospel we see how imperative it is upon us to be charitable to the poor, since Jesus gives such great reward to the charitable, and so severely punishes the uncharitable. Why? To this St. Francis the Seraph replies: "In the poor Christ reveals Himself to us as in a mirror; as often, therefore, as a poor or feeble person meets you, remember the poverty and weakness Christ took upon Himself for us, and revere in him Christ Himself, who says: As long as you did it to one of these least in my name, you did it to me."

TUESDAY IN THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Isai.* lv. 6—11.) In those days: Isaias the prophet spake, saying: Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found: call upon him, while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his

way, and the unjust man his thoughts, and let him return to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he is bountiful to forgive. For my thoughts are not your thoughts: nor your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are my ways exalted above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts. And as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return no more thither, but soak the earth and water it, and make it to spring, and give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be which shall go forth from my mouth: it shall not return to me void, but it shall do whatsoever I please, and shall prosper in the things for which I sent it, saith the Lord Almighty.

EXPLANATION. The prophet here exhorts the sinner to use the time of grace, for real conversion, when God is so willingly ready to receive him. He should not permit himself to be kept back, neither by the number nor the enormity of his sins; for greater than all his sins is the mercy of God. — Consider St. Bernard's words on this text: Seek the Lord, while he may be found: "Three reasons there are that render fruitless the search for the Lord,— not to seek Him at the proper time, in the proper manner, and there where He can be found. The proper time is in this life, for with death the search is ended, the door is locked; the proper manner is to seek with ardent desire and with perseverance; the right place is in meditating on the life, passion, and death of Jesus, and His glory in heaven." Seek the Lord in time, therefore, seek Him with all zeal, in prayer and contemplation.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxi. 10—17.) At that time: When he was come into Jerusalem, the whole city was moved, saying: Who is this? And the people said: This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth of Galilee. And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the chairs of them that sold doves: and he saith to them: It is written, "My house shall be called the house of prayer; but you have made it a den of thieves." And there came to him the blind and the lame in the temple: and he healed them. And the chief priests and scribes seeing the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying: "Hosanna to the son of David," were moved

with indignation, and said to him: Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus said to them: Yea, have you never read: "Out of the mouths of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" And leaving them, he went out of the city into Bethania, and remained there.

EXPLANATION. The spirit of usury induced many Jews to trade even in the vestibule of the temple. Condemning this disgraceful disorder, Jesus with divine force turned out the buyers and sellers. If Jesus thus condemned and punished those who desecrated the entrance of the temple, how will He scorn and punish those Christians who desecrate the Church, the house in which Jesus is present in the blessed Sacrament, by talking, laughing, and other misdemeanors? Always conduct yourself, therefore, with reverence in the house of God, and consider that even the angels prostrate before the eyes of God, cover their faces, adoring the Lord of heaven and earth.

WEDNESDAY IN THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT.

[Emberday.]

LESSON. (iii. *Kings* xix. 3—8.) In those days: Elias came into Bersabee of Juda, and left his servant there. And he went forward one day's journey into the desert. And when he was there, and sat under a juniper tree, he requested for his soul that he might die, and said: It is enough for me, Lord, take away my soul: for I am no better than my fathers. And he cast himself down, and slept in the shadow of the juniper tree: and behold, an angel of the Lord touched him and said to him: Arise and eat. And he looked, and behold, there was at his head a hearth-cake and a vessel of water: and he ate and drank, and he fell asleep again. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time and touched him, and said to him: Arise, eat: for thou hast yet a great way to go. And he arose, and ate, and drank, and walked in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights, unto the mount of God.

EXPLANATION. The Prophet Elias had caused the death of the idolatrous priests of Baal at the brook Cison, in the Land of Juda, after he had demonstrated to them, by a great miracle, the worship of the one true God. This was announced to the impious Queen Jezabel, who then threatened Elias with death. Elias fled to the desert, but God did not abandon His servant, and sent him food, strengthened by which Elias walked forty

days and forty nights to Mount Horeb, where God appeared to him, and gave him important messages. The holy fathers regard the juniper tree, under which Elias rested, as prefiguring the cross of Christ, under the shadow of which there is rest for all who suffer; the food by which Elias was strengthened, was a type of holy Communion by which we are strengthened on the road to heaven, and the forty days and forty nights which Elias passed without food are a figure of Christ's forty days fast.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xii. 38—50.) At that time: Some of the Scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying: Master, we would see a sign from thee. Who answering said to them: An evil and adulterous generation seeketh for a sign; and a sign shall not be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights: so shall the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. The men of Ninive shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; because they did penance at the preaching of Jonas. And behold a greater than Jonas here. The queen of the south shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon here. When an unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith: I will return into my house, from whence I came out. And coming he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then he goeth, and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is made worse than the first. So shall it be also to this wicked generation. As he was yet speaking to the multitudes, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, seeking to speak to him. And one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, seeking thee. But he answering him that told him, said: Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? and stretching forth his hand towards his disciples, he said: Behold my mother and my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of my Father that is in heaven; he is my brother and sister, and mother.

EXPLANATION. All signs and miracles which Christ the Lord wrought, were confirmed only by His resurrection. Had Christ not risen, all His miracles would have been without avail. For this reason He drew the attention of the Pharisees to His resurrection, which was already prefigured by the Prophet Jonas, who was three days inside the whale, and on the third day came forth from it unharmed. The inhabitants of Ninive repented, through the preaching of the Prophet Jonas without asking for a miracle. What will become of us if we do not repent, we who know of so many miracles of our Lord and His apostles, and have received so many graces from Him! But our repentance must be real, for terrible is his condition who carelessly relapses into the old grievous sins. Not one, but seven devils will possess him. By a firm, animated faith, we are in a spiritual manner made a brother or sister of Christ, and if by our example and our words we cause the love of Christ to be born in the heart of our neighbor, so that he fulfils the will of the Heavenly Father, we are also spiritually made the mother of Christ. Ah, what dignity is his who believes in Jesus, and loves Him above all!

THURSDAY IN THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Ezek.* xviii. 1—9.) In those days: The word of the Lord came to me, saying: What is the meaning that you use among you this parable as a proverb in the land of Israel, saying: The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the teeth of the children are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord God, this parable shall be no more to you a proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine: as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, the same shall die. And if a man be just, and do judgment and justice, and hath not eaten upon the mountains, nor lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, and hath not defiled his neighbour's wife, nor come near to a menstruous woman: and hath not wronged any man, but hath restored the pledge to the debtor, hath taken nothing away by violence: hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment: hath not lent upon usury, nor taken any increase: hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, and hath executed true judgment between man and man: hath walked in my commandments and kept my judgments, to do according to the truth: he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord God.

EXPLANATION. As the Jews had complained to God, at different times, that they were made to suffer for the sins of their forefathers, God, by the prophet, told them their complaints were unfounded, for He loved and judged all men, the father as the son, and punished the sinner only. It is indeed frequently stated in the holy Scriptures, that God visits the sins of parents upon the children, but this is the case only with those who, born with their parents' evil inclinations, do not resist, but imitate the bad habits of their parents. Live in accordance with God's will, and you will never have reason to complain of Him.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xv. 21—28.) At that time: Jesus went from thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And behold a woman of Canaan who came out of those

coasts, crying out, said to him. Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David, my daughter is grievously troubled by a devil. Who answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying: Send her away, for she crieth after us: and he answering, said: I was not sent but to the sheep that are lost of the house of Israel. But she came and adored him, saying: Lord, help me. Who answering said: It is not good to take the bread of the children, and to cast it to the dogs. But she said, Yea, Lord; for the whelps also eat of the crumbs that fall from the table of their masters. Then Jesus answering, said to her: O woman, great is thy faith: be it done to thee as thou wilt: and her daughter was cured from that hour.

EXPLANATION. How true it is as the prophet says: "God at all times hears the desires of the poor." The distressed mother ceased not to implore Jesus' help, and she was heard. St. Augustine beautifully says of this: "The continued sighs of a desiring and longing heart, are sweet music unto Christ;" and St. Chrysostom: "Whether or not we receive that for which we ask, let us ever persevere in prayer; if we receive, we are thankful; are we refused, we remain patient. For if God refuses anything, it is the same as if He had granted us something. For we know not what is for our benefit, only God knows it."

FRIDAY IN THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT.

[Emberday.]

LESSON. (*Ezek.* xviii. 20—28.) Thus saith the Lord: The soul that sinneth, the same shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, and the father shall not bear the iniquity of the son: the justice of the just shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. But if the wicked do penance for all his sins, which he hath committed, and keep all my commandments, and do judgment and justice: living he shall live, and shall not die. I will not remember all his iniquities that he hath done: in his justice which he hath wrought, he shall live. Is it my will that a sinner should die, saith the Lord God, and not that he should be converted from his ways, and live? But if the just man turn himself away from his justice, and do iniquity according to all the abominations, which the wicked man useth to

work, shall he live? All his justices which he hath done, shall not be remembered: in the prevarication, by which he hath prevaricated, and in his sin, which he hath committed, in them he shall die. And you have said: The way of the Lord is not right. Hear ye, therefore, O house of Israel: is it my way that is not right, and are not rather your ways perverse? For when the just turneth himself away from his justice, and committeth iniquity, he shall die therein: in the injustice that he hath wrought, he shall die. And when the wicked turneth himself away from his wickedness, which he hath wrought, and doeth judgment and justice, he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth and turneth away himself, from all his iniquities, which he hath wrought, he shall surely live, and not die, saith the Lord Almighty.

EXPLANATION. How consoling are the words of the Lord for every one, even for the greatest sinner, if he only sincerely returns to God, and abandons the way of sin! How dreadful, on the contrary, are they for him who postpones his conversion from day to day, and will finally die in his sins! Despair not, then, O sinner, only follow instantly the call to repentance; "God pardons, yes, forgets all thy sins!"

GOSPEL. (*John* v. 1—15.) At that time: There was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem a pond, called Probatica, which in Hebrew is named Bethsaida, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick, of blind, of lame, and of withered, waiting for the moving of the water. And the angel of the Lord descended at certain times into the pond; and the water was moved. And he that went down first into the pond after the motion of the water, was made whole of whatsoever infirmity he lay under. And there was a certain man there, that had been eight and thirty years under his infirmity. Him when Jesus had seen lying, and knew that he had been now a long time, he saith to him: Wilt thou be made whole? The infirm man answered him: Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pond. For whilst I am coming, another goeth down before me. Jesus saith to him: Arise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole: and he took up his

bed and walked. And it was the Sabbath that day. The Jews therefore said to him that was cured: It is the Sabbath, it is not lawful for thee to take up thy bed. He answered them: He that made me whole, he said to me: Take up thy bed, and walk. They asked him therefore: Who is that man that said to thee: Take up thy bed, and walk? But he that was healed, knew not who it was. For Jesus went aside from the multitude standing in the place. Afterwards Jesus findeth him in the temple, and saith to him: Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest some worse thing happen to thee. The man went his way, and told the Jews that it was Jesus that had made him whole.

EXPLANATION. At a certain, but unknown time, an angel came down and moved the water in the sheep-pond, by which that patient, and he only, who first descended into it, was healed of his infirmity. The sheep-pond is a figure of the holy Sacrament of Penance. When God moves your heart by His grace to sorrow for your sins, then hasten at once to the tribunal of penance, where not one, but all who come, find healing at all times. But take to heart the exhortation of Jesus: "Sin no more, lest some worse thing happen to thee."

SATURDAY IN THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT.

[Emberday.]

EPISTLE. (i. *Thess.* v. 14—23.) Brethren: We beseech you, rebuke the unquiet, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient towards all men. See that none render evil for evil to any man: but ever follow that which is good towards each other, and towards all men. Always rejoice. Pray without ceasing. In all things give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you all. Extinguish not the spirit. Despise not prophecies. But prove all things: hold fast that which is good. From all appearance of evil refrain yourselves. And may the God of peace himself sanctify you in all things: that your whole spirit and soul, and body may be preserved blameless in the coming of our Lord Christ Jesus.

EXPLANATION. Among other admonitions the apostle exhorts us not to extinguish by sin, levity, and a distracted life the spirit in ourselves, that is, the graces, the inspirations, and the

enlightenment of the Holy Ghost; and tells us, that we should not despise prophecies, that is, the gift of expounding the Scriptures, preaching the mysteries of faith, but rather examine if they agree with the teachings of the Church. Let us in all things follow the inspirations of the Holy Ghost, and the teachings of our holy Church, and we will never go wrong, but confidently look for the day of Christ's coming in judgment.

[For the gospel and its explanation see instruction for to-morrow.]

INSTRUCTION FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT. (REMINISCERE.)

THE Introit of this day's Mass, which begins with the word Reminiscere, from which this Sunday derives its name, is the prayer of a soul begging God's assistance, that she may sin no more: "Remember, o Lord, thy bowels of compassion: and thy mercies that are from the beginning of the world. Let not our enemies ever rule over us: deliver us, O God of Israel, from all our distress. To thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul; in thee, O my God, I put my trust; let me not be ashamed." (*Ps.* xxiv.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who seest how destitute we are of all strength, preserve us both within and without, that our bodies may be free from all adversity, and our souls purified from all evil thoughts. Through our Lord, &c.

EPISTLE. (i. *Thess.* iv. 1—7.) BRETHREN: We pray and beseech you in the Lord Jesus, that as you have received of us, how you ought to walk and to please God, so also you would walk, that you may abound the more. For you know what precepts I have given to you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from fornication, that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour: not in the passion of lust, like the Gentiles that know not God: and that no man over-reach, nor circumvent his brother in business: because the Lord is the avenger of all these things, as we have told you before, and have testified. For God hath not called us, unto uncleanness, but unto sanctification.

EXPLANATION. From these words we see, that the great Teacher of Nations as carefully showed the Christian congregations the sanctity of their calling, as he labored to lead them from the blindness and abominations of heathenism.

ASPIRATION. Grant, O God, that I may live honestly, chastely, and holily, in accordance with my vocation, and go not after earthly and carnal pleasures, as the heathens who know Thee not.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xvii. 1—9.) At that time: Jesus taketh unto him Peter and James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart: and he was transfigured before them. And his face did shine as the sun: and

his garments became white as snow. And behold there appeared to them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then Peter answering, said to Jesus: Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. And as he was yet speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them. And lo a voice out of the cloud, saying: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him. And the disciples hearing, fell upon their face, and were very much afraid. And Jesus came and touched them: and said to them: Arise, and be not afraid. And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one, but only Jesus. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying: Tell the vision to no man, till the Son of Man shall be risen from the dead.

Why was Christ transfigured in presence of His apostles, on Mount Tabor?

To permit them to see the glorious majesty of His divinity; to guard them from doubts when they should afterwards see Him die on Mount Calvary; to encourage because of the future glory the disciples, and with them all the faithful, to be patient in all crosses and afflictions, for the bodies of the just at the resurrection will be made like the glorified body of Christ. (*Phil.* iii. 21.)

Why did Moses and Elias appear there?

That they might testify, that Jesus was really the Saviour, announced by the law and the prophets, and that the law and the prophets received fulfilment in Him. The law was represented by Moses, the prophets by Elias.

Why did Peter wish to build three tabernacles there?

The delightful sweetness of the apparition in which Jesus made him participator, so enraptured him, that he knew not what he said, not considering that glory cannot be attained without labor, the crown without fight, joy without crosses and afflictions.

ASPIRATION. Draw us, O Jesus, to Thee, that by the contemplation of the sacred joys awaiting us, we may, by Thy grace, be not defeated in the spiritual contest, by the conqueror, and carry off the unfading crown of victory.

MONDAY IN THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Dan.* ix. 15—19.) In those days: Daniel prayed to the Lord, saying: O Lord our God, who hast brought forth thy people out of the land of Egypt with a strong hand and made thee a name as at this day: we have sinned, we have committed iniquity, O Lord, against all thy justice: let thy wrath and thy indignation be turned away, I beseech thee, from thy city Jerusalem, and from thy holy mountain. For by reason of our sins, and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are a reproach to all that are round about us. Now therefore, O our God, hear the supplication of thy servant, and his prayers: and shew thy face upon thy sanctuary which is desolate, for thy own sake. Incline, O my God, thy ear, and hear: open thy eyes, and see our desolation, and the city upon which thy name is called: for it is not for our justifications that we present our prayers before thy face, but for the multitude of thy tender mercies. O Lord hear: O Lord, be appeased: hearken and do: delay not for thy own sake, O my God: because thy name is invocated upon thy city, and upon thy people, O Lord our God.

EXPLANATION. Under the reign of King Joachim in punishment for their wickedness, the Jews with their king were led into the Babylonian captivity, and Jerusalem and the temple destroyed. Daniel, also, though a faithful follower of the divine law, was among the captives. Because of his wisdom, he was raised to great dignities by King Nabuchodonosor, but he could not forget the destruction of the temple, of Jerusalem, and the sad condition of the Jews. But the Jews were to remain seventy years in painful servitude, before they could return to their own country. For the restoration of the city and temple, and for the speedy return of his people, it is that the prophet cries to God in this lesson; by which we are taught, at the same time, to entreat God for redemption from the servitude of sin, and for the restoration of the immaculate purity of our soul, destroyed by sin.

GOSPEL. (*John* viii. 21—29.) At that time: Jesus said to the multitude of the Jews: I go and you shall seek me, and you shall die in your sin. Whither I go, you cannot come. The Jews therefore said: Will he kill himself, because he said: Whither I go, you cannot come? And he said to them: You are from beneath, I am from above. You are of this

world, I am not of this world. Therefore I say to you, that you shall die in your sins. For if you believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sin. They said therefore to him: Who art thou? Jesus said to them: The beginning, who also speak unto you. Many things I have to speak, and to judge of you. But he that sent me is true: and the things I have heard of him, the same I speak in the world. Now they understood not that he called God his Father. Jesus therefore said to them: When you shall have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall you know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself, but as the Father has taught me, these things I speak. And he that sent me, is with me, and he hath not left me alone: for I do always the things that please him.

EXPLANATION. Christ here tells the Jews, who, out of hatred, intended to put Him to death, and were lying in wait for an opportunity to do so, that where He was going, they could not come, that is, to His Father in heaven, because they were from beneath, that is, earthly minded, taken up with the riches and pleasures of this world only, and, therefore, did not believe, that He had come from heaven to redeem the world, and so they die in their sins.—Let us learn from this how needful it is, that we should despise the world, for the friendship of this world is the enmity of God, and whoever is a friend of this world, becomes an enemy of God (*Jam.* iv. 4.), loses his living faith, and dies in his sins.

TUESDAY IN THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (iii. *Kings* xviii. 8—16.) In those days: The word of the Lord came to Elias the Thesbite, saying: Arise, and go to Sarephta a city of the Sidonians, and dwell there: for I have commanded a widow woman there to feed thee. He arose, and went to Sarephta. And when he was come to the gate of the city, he saw the widow woman gathering sticks, and he called her, and said to her. Give me a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And when she was going to fetch it, he called after her, saying: Bring me, also, I beseech thee, a morsel of bread in thy hand. And she answered: As the Lord thy God liveth, I have no bread, but only a handful of meal in a pot, and a little oil in a cruse: behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And Elias

said to her: Fear not, but go, and do as thou hast said: but first make for me of the same meal a little hearth cake, and bring it to me: and after make for thyself and thy son. For thus saith the Lord the God of Israel: The pot of meal shall not waste, nor the cruse of oil be diminished, until the day wherein the Lord will give rain upon the face of the earth. She went, and did according to the word of Elias: and he ate, and she, and her house: and from that day the pot of meal wasted not, and the cruse of oil was not diminished, according to the word of the Lord, which he spoke in the hand of Elias.

EXPLANATION. In this lesson the Church calls our attention, by the example of the widow of Sarephta who was willing to share her last morsel with God's servant, Elias, to the pleasure it gives God to see charity shown the poor, which He rewards even in this world. "Almsgiving," says St. Chrysostom, "is the most profitable profession;" and St. John, Archbishop of Alexandria, who on account of his charity to the poor received the name of "Almsgiver", often said: "The more I give to the poor, the more and the greater do I receive from God." Do this likewise, and thou wilt find, that even now the hand of the Lord is not shortened.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xiii. 1—12.) At that time: Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to his disciples, saying: the Scribes and the Pharisees have sitten on the chair of Moses. All things therefore, whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do: but according to their works do ye not: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy and insupportable burdens: and lay them on men's shoulders: but with a finger of their own they will not move them. And all these works they do to be seen of men. For they make their phylacteries broad and enlarge their fringes. And they love the first places at feasts, and the first chairs in the synagogues, and salutations in the market-place, and to be called by men Rabbi. But be not you called Rabbi. For one is your master and all you are brethren. And call none your father upon earth: for one is your father, who is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your master, Christ. He that is the greatest among you, shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt

himself, shall be humbled: and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted.

EXPLANATION. Christ warns us against the hypocrisy and ambition of the Pharisees who not seeing how miserable they were, sought only to be honored and praised.—Fly from vain glory, ambition, and hypocrisy, for "all a man's virtues and excellent qualities, if he is bloated with pride and vanity, have only the appearance of good without inward value," says St. Francis de Sales (*Phil.* iii. 4.), and St. Gregory says, "All that we do, is lost, if it is not founded on humility;" and St. Bernard, "Narrow is the door of heaven, and only the small can pass through it," that is, only those who, like children, walk simply and humbly.

WEDNESDAY IN THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Esther* xiii. 8—17.) In those days: Mardochai besought the Lord, remembering all his works, and said: O Lord, Lord, almighty King, for all things are in thy power, and there is none that can resist thy will, if thou determine to save Israel. Thou hast made heaven and earth, and all things that are under the cope of heaven. Thou art Lord of all, and there is none that can resist thy majesty. Thou knowest all things, and thou knowest that it was not out of pride and contempt, or any desire of glory, that I refused to worship the proud Aman (for I would willingly and readily for the salvation of Israel have kissed even the steps of his feet:) but I feared, lest I should transfer the honour of my God to a man, and lest I should adore any one except my God. And now, O Lord, O King, O God of Abraham, have mercy on thy people, because our enemies resolve to destroy us, and extinguish thy inheritance. Despise not thy portion which thou hast redeemed for thyself out of Egypt. Hear my supplication, and be merciful to thy lot and inheritance, and turn our mourning into joy, that we may live and praise thy name, O Lord, and shut not the mouths of them that sing to thee, O Lord our God.

EXPLANATION. Aman, one of the favorites of the Persian King Assuerus, aspired in his pride and conceit to divine honors. Mardochai, a Jew and fosterfather of Queen Esther, refused them to him, because they are due only to God. In revenge Aman sought to destroy all the Jews, and bring Mardochai to the gallows, which he had already erected for him. In this strait Mardochai prayed to God, and his prayer was heard. Aman himself,

when his evil intentions became known, was hung on the very gallows he had prepared for Mardochai.—Consider the effect of Mardochai's prayer, and on the truth that God ruins the proud (*Luke* i. 52.), and that he who diggeth a pit for his neighbor, generally falls in it himself.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xx. 17—28.) At that time: Jesus going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart, and said to them: Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to be mocked, and to be scourged, and to be crucified, and the third day he shall rise again. Then came to him the mother of the sons of Zebedee with her sons, adoring and asking something of him. Who said to her: What wilt thou? She saith to him: Say that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom. And Jesus answering, and said: You know not what you ask. Can you drink the chalice that I shall drink? They say to him: We can. He saith to them: Of my chalice indeed you shall drink: but to sit on my right hand or left hand, is not mine to give to you, but to them for whom it is prepared by my Father. And the ten hearing it, were moved with indignation against the two brethren. But Jesus called them to him, and said: You know that the princes of the Gentile, lord it over them: and they that are the greater, exercise power upon them. It shall not be so among you, but whosoever will be the greater among you, let him be your minister: and he that will be first among you, shall be your servant. Even as the Son of Man is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a redemption for many.

EXPLANATION. I. For the last time the Saviour goes to Jerusalem, and, on His way, announces His death on the cross to the twelve apostles. Of this St. Chrysostom says: "The salvation of men is all in the death of Christ, and there is nothing for which we should thank God more than for the death of His Son. Therefore, Christ took the twelve apostles aside, and told them of the mystery of His death, that this precious treasure might be en-

closed in the best hearts, that is, in the hearts of the apostles," that they might give it to all men.

II. To the ambitious request of the mother of James and John, Jesus replied, that they must indeed suffer, but to sit on His right hand He could not give. Of this St. Remigius and St. Bede write: "It is not suitable for me to give them the place on my right hand, because you are ambitious. This place is prepared for the humble. If you are humble, it is also ready for you." See how necessary is humility, for even martyrdom is not rewarded without it.

THURSDAY IN THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Jer.* xvii. 5—10.) Thus saith the Lord: Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like tamarick in the desert, and he shall not see when good shall come: but he shall dwell in dryness in the desert, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed be the man that trusteth in the Lord, and the Lord shall be his confidence. And he shall be as a tree that is planted by the waters, and spreadeth out its roots towards moisture: and it shall not fear when the heat cometh. And the leaf thereof shall be green, and in the time of drought it shall not be solicitous, neither shall it cease at any time to bring forth fruit. The heart is perverse above all things, and unsearchable, who can know it? I am the Lord that search the heart, and prove the reins; who give to every one according to his way, and according to the fruit of his devices, saith the Lord Almigthy.

INSTRUCTION. In a threefold way the curse of God is manifested in him who trusts Him not: God, angels, and saints abandon him; all divine grace and assistance in good works are withdrawn from him; all the merit of his work is taken away, and all his actions and performances will bring no good fruit.—Never place your confidence, therefore, in miserable, fickle man, but in the omnipotent, eternal God, and you will always receive assistance.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xvi. 19—31.) At that time: Jesus said to the Pharisees: There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen: and feasted sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, who lay at his gate, full of sores, desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, and no one did

give him, moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. And the rich man also died, and he was buried in hell. And lifting up his eyes, when he was in torments, he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried, and said: Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, to cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. And Abraham said to him: Son, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is fixed a great chaos: so that they who would pass from hence to you, cannot, nor from thence come hither. And he said: Then father, I beseech thee that thou wouldst send him to my father's house. For I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torments. And Abraham said to him: They have Moses and the prophets: let them hear them. But he said: No, Father Abraham, but if any one went to them from the dead, they will do penance. And he said to him: If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe, if one rise again from the dead.

EXPLANATION. Christ, in this parable, teaches that those who make bad use of earthly riches, and only abuse them by vain luxuries, will be deprived of eternal good and punished with eternal torments, while those, who following Christ's example, lead a poor, toilsome, but virtuous life, will be eternally rewarded. "It is difficult, even impossible," writes St. Jerome, "for those who here enjoy present riches, should enjoy eternal ones in future; impossible for one here to fill his stomach, and in the next world his soul, passing over from earthly pleasures to heavenly joys, receiving honor on earth and honor also in heaven."

FRIDAY IN THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Gen.* xxxvii. 6—22.) In those days: Joseph said to his brethren: Hear my dream which I have dreamed: I thought, we were binding sheaves in the field: and my sheaf

arose as it were, and stood, and your sheaves standing about bowed down before my sheaf. His brethren answered: Shalt thou be our king? or shall we be subject to thy dominion? Therefore this matter of his dreams and words ministered nourishment to their envy and hatred. He dreamed also another dream which he told his brethren, saying: I saw in a dream, as it were the sun, and the moon, and eleven stars, worshipping me. And when he had told this to his father, and brethren, his father rebuked him, and said: What meaneth this dream that thou hast dreamed? shall I and thy mother, and thy brethren, worship thee upon the earth? His brethren therefore envied him: but his father considered the thing with himself. And when his brethren abode in Sichem, feeding their father's flocks, Israel said to him: Thy brethren feed the sheep in Sichem: come, I will send thee to them. And when he answered: I am ready: he said to him: Go, and see if all things be well with thy brethren, and the cattle: and bring me word again what is doing. So being sent from the vale of Hebron, he came to Sichem. And a man found him there wandering in the field, and asked him what he sought. But he answered: I seek my brethren: tell me where they feed their flocks. And the man said to him: They are departed from this place: for I heard them say: let us go to Dothain. And Joseph went forward after his brethren, and found them in Dothain. And when they saw him afar off, before he came nigh them, they thought to kill him: and said one to another: Behold, the dreamer cometh, come let us kill him, and cast him into some old pit; and we will say: some evil beast hath devoured him; and then it shall appear what his dreams avail him. And Ruben hearing this, endeavoured to deliver him out of their hands, and said: Do not take away his life, nor shed his blood: but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and keep your hands harmless: now he said this, being desirous to deliver him out of their hands and restore him to his father.

INSTRUCTION. This history shows us to what great crimes men may be led by envy. "Envy," says St. Cyprian, "is the root of all evil, the foundation of war, the seed of crime," and St. Chrysostom, "The envious are worse than wild beasts, and equal to the devils, even still worse than they; for the devils injure neither themselves nor their kind, while the envious honor not

the ties of nature, nor spare even themselves." The Christian, therefore, should guard and take care against nothing more than the snares of envy.

INSTRUCTION ON THE VICE OF ENVY, AND THE CURE FOR IT.

ENvy is either a pain, a kind of sadness because of another's prosperity, or joy at his misfortunes. He is envious who is inwardly disturbed, grieved, and sad, if his neighbor possesses more, is more honored, or gains more than he, or who rejoices if his neighbor is injured, if shame falls upon him, or if he loses his reputation. Envy is felt towards those who occupy a higher position, because the envious one cannot become their equal; towards those of inferior condition, because he fears they will become equal to him; and to his equals, because he possesses no more than they. Such envy had Saul on account of David, the Pharisees of Christ.

Envy is one of the most detestable of vices, because it is so frequently found on earth, and because none so destroys individual happiness, as well as the welfare of whole nations. Its consequences are often enmity, vengeance, murder. It at once opposes the love of our neighbor, and is therefore hated by God.

To exterminate the roots of this vice as soon as they germinate in the heart, it is well to consider often:

I. that envious people are like the devil whom our good works make dissatisfied, and who feels the greatest pain at them because of the eternal reward promised, which we can obtain, for he has lost it and can never regain it. "Would that God," writes St. Augustine, "turn away the pest of envy out of all Christian souls, for envy is a diabolical crime, the only one of which the devil is in an unforgiving manner properly guilty, because as a fallen spirit, he feels the most furious envy of man who remains standing;"

II. that nothing is gained by envy, but the envious one imbitters his own life; the peace of heart abandons him, whether he sees his neighbor in prosperity or in adversity;

III. that the envious loses the benefit of all his neighbor's good works, because he has no love for him, and is not in the state of grace. The envious becomes constantly poorer and more corrupt the more his neighbor increases in good works. This St. Gregory indicates, when he says: "Love, by its love, has a share in the good deeds of its neighbor, but envy turns them, by its hatred, into so many heart sores;"

IV. that envy devours the heart, consumes the body, tortures the spirit and frightens away all joy from the soul. The Scriptures call envy the rottenness of the bones (*Prov.* xiv. 30.); some fathers

of the Church call it the judge and executioner of man, because the envious destroys himself by his own selftorments; finally,

V. that envy is generally born from the mother of all sins: Pride. The proud cannot endure, that any one of higher standing should be made his equal or possess more than he, so envy springs up in his heart towards those who excel him, who gain or possess more than he. Strive, therefore, to practise the virtue of humility, and consider that God regards not the dignity, nor the wealth, or honor of man, but the humble, meek, and loving heart, which he makes still richer with His blessings.

ASPIRATION. O Jesus who wast made to suffer so much by the envy of the Pharisees, grant, that I may despise this vice, and always love my neighbor, thus imitating Thee who didst shed Thy blood for love of us.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxi. 33—46.) At that time Jesus spoke to the multitude of the Jews, and to the chief priests this parable: There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and made a hedge round about it, and dug in it a press, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen: and went into a strange country. And when the time of the fruits drew nigh, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits thereof. And the husbandmen laying hands on his servants, beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants more than the former: and they did to them in like manner. And last of all he sent them his Son, saying: They will reverence my Son: But when the husbandmen seeing the Son, they said among themselves: This is the heir, come, let us kill him, and we shall have his inheritance. And taking him they cast him forth out of the vineyard, and killed him. When therefore the lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do to those husbandmen? They say to him: He will bring those evil men to an evil end: and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen, that shall render him the fruit in due season. Jesus saith to them: Have you never read in the Scriptures: "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? By the Lord this hath been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes." Therefore I say

to you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation yielding the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder. And when the chief priests and pharisees had heard his parables, they knew that he spoke of them. And seeking to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude: because they held him as a prophet.

EXPLANATION. The householder in this parable, is God; the vineyard is the Church before and after Christ; the hedge the protection of God's providence and His angels; the winepress is the word of God, which exhorts man to good; the tower the earthly protection of the superiors; the husbandmen, who are the priests, the kings, the judges, and the learned; the going away of the householder represents the invisibility of God; the time of the fruits, that is, of good works, should always be at hand, because we should be always serving God, and producing the fruit of good works; the servants are the prophets, the apostles; the son Christ Jesus, whom the Jews crucified, and whom sinners and the enemies of Christianity still crucify. The kingdom of God was, therefore, taken away from the Jews, and will be taken from sinners and Christ's enemies, because they despise and persecute the Lord, and by their sins crucify Him anew. Woe to you, if you acknowledge not the truth, and if you bring not forth good fruits!

SATURDAY IN THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Gen.* xxvii. 6—40.) In those days: Rebecca said to her son Jacob: I heard thy father talking with Esau thy brother, and saying to him: Bring me of thy hunting, and make me meats that I may eat, and bless thee in the sight of the Lord, before I die. Now therefore, my son, follow my counsel: and go thy way to thy flock, bring me two kids of the best, that I may make of them meat for thy father, such as he gladly eateth: which when thou hast brought in, and he hath eaten, he may bless thee before he die. And he answered her: Thou knowest that Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am smooth: if my father shall feel me, and perceive it, I fear lest he will think, I would have mocked him, and I shall bring upon me a curse instead of a blessing. And his mother said to him: Upon me be this curse, my son:

only hear thou my voice, and go, fetch me the things which I have said. He went, and brought, and gave them to his mother. She dressed meat such as she knew his father liked. And she put on him very good garments of Esau, which she had at home with her: and the little skins of the kids she put about his hands, and covered the bare of his neck. And she gave him the savoury meat, and delivered him bread that she had baked. Which when he had carried in, he said: My father? But he answered: I hear. Who art thou my son? And Jacob said: I am Esau thy first-born: I have done as thou didst command me, arise, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said to his son: How couldst thou find it so quickly, my son? He answered: It was the will of God that what I sought came quickly in my way. And Isaac said: Come hither, that I may feel thee my son, and may prove whether thou be my son Esau or no: He came near to his father, and when he had felt him, Isaac said: The voice indeed is the voice of Jacob, but the hands, are the hands of Esau. And he knew him not, because his hairy hands made him like to the elder. Then blessing him, he said: Art thou my son Esau? He answered: I am. Then he said: Bring me the meats of thy hunting, my son, that my soul may bless thee. And when they were brought and he had eaten, he offered him wine also, which after he had drunk, he said to him: Come near me, and give me a kiss, my son. He came near, and kissed him. And immediately as he smelled the fragrant smell of his garments, blessing him, he said: Behold, the smell of my son is as the smell of a plentiful field, which the Lord hath blessed. God give thee of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth, abundance of corn and wine. And let peoples serve thee, and tribes worship thee: be thou lord of thy brethren, and let thy mother's children bow down before thee. Cursed be he that curseth thee: and let him that blesseth thee, be filled with blessings. Isaac had scarce ended his words, when, Jacob being now gone out abroad, Esau came, and brought in to his father meats made of what he had taken in hunting, saying: Arise, my father, and eat of thy son's venison: that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said to him: Why! who art thou? He answered: I am thy first-born son Esau. Isaac

was struck with fear, and astonished exceedingly: and wondering beyond what can be believed, said: Who is he that even now brought me venison that he had taken, and I ate of all before thou camest? and I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed. Esau having heard his father's words, roared out with a great cry: and being in a consternation, said: Bless me also, my father. And he said: Thy brother came deceitfully and got thy blessing. But he said again: Rightly is his name called Jacob: for he hath supplanted me lo this second time: my first birth-right he took away before, and now this second time he hath stolen away my blessing. And again he said to his father: Hast thou not reserved me also a blessing? Isaac answered: I have appointed him thy lord, and have made all his brethren his servants: I have established him with corn and oil, and after this, what shall I do more for thee my son? And Esau said to him: Hast thou only one blessing, father? I beseech thee, bless me also. And when he wept with a loud cry, Isaac being moved, said to him: In the fat of the earth, and in the dew of heaven from above shall thy blessing be.

INSTRUCTION. The two sons of Isaac so esteemed their father's blessing, that one of them even strove to gain it by a fraud, and the other wept and lamented in grief at losing it. Let us not disregard the blessing of our parents, because, as the Bible says, it builds houses for the children, while their curse uproots their foundations. (*Eccl.* iii. 11.) If the holy Patriarch Jacob sinned by a lie, we must bear in mind, that we are not to imagine ourselves secure, and that we should never let ourselves be led into even the smallest sin to gain any good however great.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xv. 11—32.) At that time: Jesus spoke to the Scribes and Pharisees this parable: A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father: Father, give me the portion of substance that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his substance. And not many days after, the younger son gathering all together, went abroad into a far country: and there wasted his substance with living riotously. And after he had spent all, there came a mighty famine in that country, and he began to be in want. And he went and cleaved to one of the citizens of that country. And he sent him into his farm to feed swine. And he

would fain have filled his belly with the husks the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And returning to himself he said: How many hired servants in my father's house abound with bread, and I here perish with hunger? I will arise, and will go to my father, and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee: I am not now worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And rising up he came to his father. And when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and running to him fell upon his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, I am not now worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants: Bring forth quickly the first robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat, and make merry: because this my son was dead, and is now come to life again: was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. Now his eldest son was in the field: and when he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing: and he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said to him: Thy brother is come, and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe. And he was angry, and would not go in. His father therefore coming out began to entreat him. And he answering, said to his father: Behold, for so many years do I serve thee, and I have never transgressed thy commandments, and yet thou hast never given me a kid to make merry with my friends: but as soon as this thy son is come, who hath devoured his substance with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. But he said to him: Son, thou art always with me, and all I have is thine. But it was fit, we should make merry and be glad, for this thy brother was dead, and is come to life again; he was lost and is found.

EXPLANATION. This parable was spoken principally for the Pharisees, who reproached our Saviour's loving behavior

towards publicans and sinners, at the same time it is a trustworthy testimony, for all sinners, to the willingness of God, the best Father, to receive at all times, and with most compassionate love, every one, even the greatest sinner, who truly repents, forgiving and forgetting all his misdeeds. "The food of the Heavenly Father is our salvation," says St. Ambrose, "and His joy is our redemption from our sins." Should not this unspeakable love and goodness of God move you to conversion, when, like the prodigal son, you have seen it?

INSTRUCTION FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT, called OCULI.

THE Introit of this day's Mass, which begins with the word Oculi, is the prayer of a soul imploring deliverance from the snares of the devil: My eyes are ever towards the Lord: for he shall pluck my feet out of the snare: look thou upon me, and have mercy on me; for I am alone and poor. To thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul: in thee, O my God, I put my trust, let me not be ashamed. (*Ps.* xxiv.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Be attentive, we beseech Thee, O Almighty God, to the prayers of Thy servants: and stretch forth the arm of Thy divine majesty in our defence. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, &c.

EPISTLE. (*Ephes.* v. 1—9.) BRETHREN: Be ye therefore followers of God, as most dear children, and walk in love, as Christ also loved us, and hath delivered himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God, for an odour of sweetness. But fornication and all uncleannes, or covetousness, let it not so much as be named among you, as becometh saints, or obscenity, or foolish talking, or scurrility, which is to no purpose: but rather giving of thanks. For know ye this and understand, that no fornicator, or unclean, or covetous person, (which is serving of idols) hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words. For because of these things cometh the anger of God upon the children of unbelief. Be ye not therefore partakers with them. For you were heretofore darkness, but now light

in the Lord. Walk ye as children of the light.—For the fruit of the light is in all goodness, and justice, and truth.

EXPLANATION. The apostle requires us to imitate God, as good children their father, in well doing and in well wishing; besides which he declares that all covetousness, fornication, all disgraceful talk and equivocal jokes should be banished from Christian meetings, even that such things should not be so much as mentioned among us; because these vices unfailingly deprive us of heaven. He also admonishes us, not to let ourselves be deceived by the seducing words of those who seek to make these vices appear small, nothing more than pardonable human weaknesses; those who speak thus, are the children of darkness and of the devil, and bring down the wrath of God upon themselves, and all who assent to their words. A Christian, a child of light, that is, of faith, should regard as a sin that which faith and conscience tell him, is such, and must live by the line they place, and not by the rash judgment of the wicked. Should any one seek to lead you away, ask yourself, my Christian, whether you would dare appear with such a deed before the judgment seat of God. Listen to the voice of your conscience, and let it decide, whether that which you are expected to do, is good or bad, lawful or unlawful.

ASPIRATION. Place Thy fear, O God, before my mouth, that I may utter no vain, careless, much less improper and scandalous words, which may be the occasion of sin to my neighbor. Strengthen me, that I may not be deceived by flattering words, and become faithless to Thee.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xi. 14—28.) At that time: Jesus was casting out a devil, and the same was dumb, and when he had cast out the devil, the dumb spoke: and the multitude were in admiration at it. But some of them said: he casteth out devils, by Belzebub the prince of devils. And others tempting, asked of him a sign from heaven. But he seeing their thoughts, said to them: Every kingdom divided against itself, shall be brought to desolation, and house upon house shall fall. And if Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand, because you say, that through Belzebub I cast out devils? Now if I cast out devils by Belzebub: by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I by the finger of God cast out devils: doubtless the kingdom of God is come upon you.

When a strong man armed keepeth his court, those things are in peace which he possesseth. But if a stronger than he come upon him and overcome him, he will take away all his armour wherein he trusted, and will distribute his spoils. He that is not with me, is against me: and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through places without water, seeking rest: and not finding, he saith: I will return into my house whence I came out. And when he is come, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then he goeth and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and entering

in, they dwell there. And the last state of that man becometh worse than the first. And it came to pass, as he spoke these things, a certain woman from the crowd lifting up her voice, said to him: Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the paps that gave thee suck. But he said: Yea, rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God, and keep it.

Can the devil really possess a man?

It is the faith of the Catholic Church, that the evil spirit most perniciously influences man in a twofold manner: by enticing his soul to sin, and then influencing his body which he often entirely or partially possesses, manifesting himself through it by madness, convulsions, insanity, &c. Many texts of Scripture, and the writings of the fathers, speak of this possession. St. Cyprian writes: "We can expel the swarms of impure spirits, who for the ruin of the soul, enter into the bodies of men, and compel them to acknowledge themselves, by the force of powerful words." Possession takes place partly by the permission of God for a trial, and partly as a punishment for sins committed (i. *Cor.* v. 5.), and the Church from her head, Jesus, who expelled so many devils, has received the power of casting them out as He did. (*Mark* xvi. 17.; *Acts* v. 16., viii. 6. 7., xvi. 18., *&c.*) She however warns her ministers, the priests, who by their ordination have received the power to expel the evil spirits, to distinguish carefully between possession and natural sickness, that they may not be deceived (*Rit. Rom.* §. 3. §. 5—10.), and the faithful should guard against looking upon every unusual, unhealthy appearance as an influence of Satan, and should give no ear to impostors, but in order not to be deceived, should turn to an experienced physician or to their pastor.

What is understood by a dumb devil?

The literal meaning of this is the evil enemy, who sometimes so torments those whom he possesses, that they lose the power of speech; in a spiritual sense, we may understand it to mean the shame which the devil takes away from the sinner, when he commits the sin, but gives back again, as false shame, before confession, so that he conceals the sin, and thereby commits a greater one.

How does Christ now cast out dumb devils?

By His grace with which He inwardly enlightens the sinner, so that he becomes keenly aware, that the sins which he has concealed in confession, will one day be known to the whole world, and encourages him to overcome his false shame.—"Be not ashamed to confess to one man," says St. Augustine, "that which you were not ashamed to do with one, perhaps, with many."

Consider these words of the same saint: "Sincere confession subdues vice, conquers the evil one, shuts the door of hell, and opens the gates of paradise."

How did Christ prove, that He did not cast out devils by Beelzebub?

By showing that the kingdom of the devil could not stand, if one evil spirit were cast out by another; that they thus reproached their own sons, who also cast out devils, and had not been accused of doing so by power from Beelzebub; by His own life and works which were in direct opposition to the devil, and by which the devil's works were destroyed.—There is no better defence against calumny than an innocent life, and those who are slandered, find no better consolation than the thought of Christ, who, in spite of His sanctity and His miracles, was not secure against calumniation.

What is meant by the finger of God?

The power of God, by which Christ expelled the evil spirits, and proved Himself God, and the promised Rede mer, who commenced the kingdom of God on earth.

Who is the strong man armed?

The evil one is so called, because he still retains the power and intellect of the angels, and, practised by long experience, seeks in different ways, urged by continual hatred of God and man, to injure men, if God permits.

How is the devil armed?

With the evil desires of men, with the perishable riches, honors, and pleasures of this world, with which he entices us to evil, deceives us, and throws us into eternal fire.

Who is the stronger one who took away the devil's armor?

Christ the Lord, who came into this world, that He might destroy the works and the kingdom of the devil (*John* iii. 8.), to expel the prince of darkness (*John* xii. 31.), and to redeem us from his power. "The devil," says St. Anthony, "is like a dragon caught by the Lord with the fishing-hook of the cross, tied with a halter, like a beast of burden, chained like a fugitive slave, and his lips pierced through with a ring, so that he may not devour one of the faithful. Now he sighs, like a miserable sparrow, caught by Christ and turned to derision, and thrown under the feet of the Christians. He who flattered himself, that he would possess the whole orbit of the earth, behold, he has to yield!"

Why does Christ say: He who is not with me, is against me?

These words were intended in the first place for the Pharisees, who did not acknowledge Christ as the Messiah, would not fight with Him against Satan's power, but rather held the people back from reaching unity of faith through love of Christ. Like the Pharisees, all heretical teachers who, by their false doctrines,

draw the faithful from communion with Christ and His Church, are similar to the devil, the father of heresy and of lies. May all those, therefore, who think they can serve at the same time Christ and the world, consider that between truth and falsehood, between Christ and the world, there is no middle path; that Christ requires decision, either with Him, or against Him, either with and through Him happy, or without Him eternally lost.

Who are understood by the dry places through which the evil spirit wanders and finds no rest?

"The dry places without water," says St. Gregory, "are the hearts of the just, who by the force of penance have drained away the dampness of carnal desires." In such places the evil one indeed finds no rest, because there his malice finds no sympathy, and his wicked will no satisfaction.

Why does the evil spirit say: I will return into my house?

Because he is only contented there where he is welcomed and received: with those who have, it is true, purified their heart by confession, and driven Satan from it, but laboring not to amend, lose the grace of the Sacraments by sin, and thus devoid of virtue and grace, offer a beautiful and pleasant dwelling to the devil.

Why is it said: The last state becometh worse than the first?

Because a relapse generally draws more sins with it, and so it is said: the devil will return with seven other spirits more wicked than himself, by which may be understood the seven deadly sins, because after a relapse into sin return to God becomes more difficult, as a repeated return of the same sickness makes it harder to regain health; because by repetition sin easily becomes a habit and renders conversion almost impossible; because repeated relapses are followed by blindness of intellect, hardness of heart, and then-eternal damnation.

Why did the woman lift up her voice?

This was by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost to shame the Pharisees, who, blinded by pride, neither professed nor acknowledged the divinity of Christ, whilst this humble woman not only confessed Jesus as God, but praised her who carried Him, whom heaven and earth cannot contain, under her heart. Consider the great dignity of the blessed Virgin, Mother of the Son of God, and hear her praises from the holy fathers. St. Cyril thus salutes her: "Praise to thee, blessed Mother of God: for thou art virginity itself, the scepter of the true faith!" and St. Chrysostom: "Hail, o Mother, the throne, the glory, the heaven of the Church!" St. Ephrem: "Hail, only hope of the fathers, herald of the apostles, glory of the martyrs, joy of the saints, and crown of the virgins, because of thy vast glory, and inaccessible light!"

Why did Christ praise those happy ones who hear the word of God and keep it?

Because, as has been already said, it is not enough for salvation to hear the word of God, but it must also be fulfilled in action. Because Mary, the tender Mother of Jesus, did this most perfectly, Christ praised her as more happy in it, than in having conceived, borne, and nursed Him.

SUPPLICATION. O Lord Jesus! true Light of the world, enlighten the eyes of my soul, that I may never be induced by the evil one to conceal a sin, from false shame, in the confessional, that on the day of general judgment my sins may not be published to the whole world. Strengthen me, O Jesus, that I may resist the arms of the devil by a penitent life, and especially by scorning the fear of man and worldly considerations, and guard against lapsing into sin, that I may not be lost, but through Thy merits may be delivered from all dangers and obtain heaven.

MONDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (iv. *Kings* v. 1—15.) In those days: Naaman, general of the army of the King of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honorable: for by him the Lord gave deliverance to Syria: and he was a valiant man and rich, but a leper. Now there had gone out robbers from Syria, and had led away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid, and she waited upon Naaman's wife. And she said to her mistress: I wish my master had been with the prophet that is in Samaria: he would certainly have healed him of the leprosy which he hath. Then Naaman went in to his lord, and told him, saying: Thus and thus saith the girl, that came from the land of Israel. And the King of Syria said to him: Go, and I will send a letter to the King of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment, and brought the letter to the King of Israel, in these words: When thou shalt receive this letter, know that I have sent to thee Naaman my servant, that thou mayest heal him of his leprosy. And when the King of Israel had read the letter, he rent his garments, and said: Am I God, to be able to kill and to give life, that this man hath sent to me, to heal a man of his leprosy? mark, and see how he seeketh

occasions against me. And when Eliseus the man of God had heard this, to wit, that the King of Israel had rent his garments, he sent to him, saying: Why hast thou rent thy garments? let him come to me and let him know that there is a prophet in Israel. So Naaman came with his horses and chariots, and stood at the door of the house of Eliseus: and Eliseus sent a messenger to him, saying: Go and wash seven times in the Jordan, and thy flesh shall recover health, and thou shalt be clean. Naaman was angry, and went away, saying: I thought he would have come out to me, and standing would have invoked the name of the Lord his God, and touched with his hand the place of the leprosy, and healed me. Are not the Abana, and the Pharphar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel, that I may wash in them, and be made clean? So as he turned, and was going away with indignation, his servants came to him, and said to him: Father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, surely thou shouldst have done it: how much rather what he now hath said to thee: Wash, and thou shalt be clean? Then he went down, and washed in the Jordan seven times, according to the word of the man of God, and his flesh was restored, like the flesh of a little child, and was made clean. And returning to the man of God with all his train, he came and stood before him, and said: In truth I know there is no other God in all the earth, but only in Israel.

INSTRUCTION. The bath, which, as required by the Prophet Eliseus, the leper Naaman took in the river Jordan, and by which he was cleansed, is a type of the holy Sacraments of Penance and Baptism, "by which," as St. Ambrose says, "the leprosy of the soul, sin, is removed." Make frequent use of the holy Sacrament of Penance, that your soul may become always cleaner and more agreeable to God.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* iv. 23—30.) At that time: Jesus said to the Pharisees: Doubtless you will say to me this similitude: Physician heal thyself: as great things as we have heard done in Capharnaum, do also here in thy own country. And he said: Amen I say to you, that no prophet is accepted in his own country. In truth I say to you, there were many widows in the days of Elias in Israel, when heaven was shut

up three years and six months: when there was a great famine throughout all the land; and to none of them was Elias sent, but to Sarephta of Sidon to a widow woman. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet: and none of them was cleansed but Naaman the Syrian. And all they in the synagogue, hearing these things, were filled with anger. And they rose up and thrust him out of the city: and they brought him to the brow of the hill, whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them, went his way.

EXPLANATION. The Nazarenes despised our Saviour because of His humble birth, but when they learned of His miracles, they asked that He would also heal the sick and injured of His native place. But He refused their request, because they were without faith.—See from this how important it is, if you desire not to be given up by God, as were the Nazarenes, but to be aided by Him, that you should have an active faith, which is a gift of God, for which you should daily pray, and which you should each day renew.

TUESDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (iv. *Kings* iv. 1—7.) In those days: A certain woman of the wives of the prophets cried to Eliseus, saying: Thy servant my husband is dead, and thou knowest that thy servant was one that feared God, and behold, the creditor is come to take away my two sons to serve him. And Eliseus said to her: What wilt thou have me do for thee? Tell me what hast thou in thy house? And she answered: I thy handmaid have nothing in my house but a little oil, to anoint me. And he said to her: Go, borrow of all thy neighbours empty vessels not a few. And go in, and shut thy door, when thou art within, with thy sons: and pour out thereof into all those vessels; and when they are full, take them away. So the woman went, and shut the door upon her, and upon her sons; they brought her the vessels, and she poured in. And when the vessels were full, she said to her son: Bring me yet a vessel. And he answered: I have no more. And the oil stood. And she came and told the man

of God. And he said: Go, sell the oil, and pay the creditor: and thou and thy sons live of the rest.

INSTRUCTION. As Eliseus the Prophet, by increasing her small quantity of oil, aided the widow to pay her debts, so Jesus, says St. Augustine, the true Eliseus, by His grace and mercy, and with the oil of love, aids the Church to pay the debt of sin.—Use this grace as a child of the Church, to liquidate your debt of sin, by sorrow for them, and by beseeching Him because of the love and merits of His Son, to cancel your debt. To Mary Magdalen much was forgiven, because she loved much.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xviii. 15—22.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: If thy brother shall offend against thee, go and rebuke him between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou shalt gain thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more: that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may stand. And if he will not hear them, tell the Church. And if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican. Amen I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven. Again, I say to you, that if two of you shall consent upon earth, concerning any thing whatsoever they shall ask, it shall be done to them by my Father who is in heaven. For where there are two or three gathered together in my name; there am I in the midst of them. Then came Peter unto him and said: Lord, how often shall my brother offend against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith to him: I say not to thee till seven times; but till seventy times seven times.

EXPLANATION. In the fraternal correction of your neighbor, when he has scandalized you by some wrong act, there are, as Jesus teaches, four degrees or steaps to be observed: First, speak to him gently before no other eyes than his and your own; secondly, if he will not listen to this, take with you two or three well disposed, impartial witnesses, that they may unite with you in warning and exhorting him; thirdly, if still he will not listen, refer it to the pastors, the bishops, and priests of the Church, that they may interfere and remove the scandal; fourthly, if he will not hear even these, then let him be excluded from the com-

munion of the faithful, which Jesus leaves with the pastors of the Church to do, for to them He gives the power to bind and to loose. Such a one must then be avoided, and no communication held with him, but he is to be prayed for, that God may open his eyes. For prayer, especially when one voice mingles with another in praying for the same thing, if several persons unite in it, is always heard by the Heavenly Father. To the words of Jesus, that we should seventy times seven times forgive one who has offended us, "I venture to add," says St. Augustine, "if your brother has offended you seventy eight, even a hundred times, forgive him; yes, forgive him as often as he offends you; for if Christ found thousands of sins, and yet forgives them all, so do you also not refuse mercy."

WEDNESDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Exod.* xx. 12—24.) Thus saith the Lord God: Honour thy father and thy mother, that thou mayest be long lived upon the land which the Lord thy God will give thee. Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, neither shalt thou desire his wife, nor his servant, nor his hand-maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his. And all the people saw the voices and the flames, and the sound of the trumpet, and the mount smoking: and being terrified and struck with fear, they stood afar off, saying to Moses: Speak thou to us, and we will hear: let not the Lord speak to us, lest we die. And Moses said to the people: Fear not; for God is come to prove you, and that the dread of him might be in you, and you should not sin. And the people stood afar off. But Moses went to the dark cloud wherein God was. And the Lord said to Moses: Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel: You have seen that I have spoken to you from heaven. You shall not make gods of silver, nor shall you make to yourselves gods of gold. You shall make an altar of earth unto me, and you shall offer upon it your holocausts and peace-offerings, your sheep and oxen, in every place where the memory of my name shall be.

EXPLANATION. God gave the commandments, which are written in the heart of every human being (*Rom.* ii. xv.), to the Jews in thunder and lightning, that, as they were a hardened

people, they might be urged by fear to keep them. But the true Christian keeps the commandments for love of God, for Christ says: "Who keeps my commandments, he it is, that loves me" (*John* xiv. 21.); and St. Augustine writes: "He who has my commandments in his memory, and keeps them on his way; who has them in his words, and keeps them in his deeds; who so has them, that he hears them and keeps them; so that he fulfils them and perseveres in them, he it is that loves me." Say never, that you love God, if you keep not His commandments.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xv. 1—20.) At that time: The Scribes and Pharisees came from Jerusalem to Jesus, and saying to him: Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the ancients? For they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answering, said to them: Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for your tradition? For God said: "Honour thy father and mother:" and, "he that shall curse father or mother, let him die the death." But you say: Whosoever shall say to his father or mother, The gift whatsoever proceedeth from me, shall profit thee. And he shall not honour his father or mother: and you have made void the commandment of God for your tradition. Hypocrites, well has Isaias prophesied of you, saying: "This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. And in vain do they worship me, teaching doctrines and commandments of men." And having called together the multitudes unto him, he said to them: Hear ye and understand. Not that which goeth into the mouth, defileth a man: but what cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. Then came his disciples, and said to him: Dost thou know that the Pharisees, when they heard this word, were scandalized? But he answering, said: Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they are blind, and leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both fall into the pit. And Peter answering, said to him: Expound to us this parable. But he said: Are you also yet without understanding? Do you not understand, that whatsoever entereth into the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the privy? But the things

which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and those things defile a man. For out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies. These are the things that defile a man. But to eat with unwashed hands, doth not defile a man.

INSTRUCTION. Unbelievers, and also lukewarm Catholics, reproach the Church among other things for imposing upon the faithful commands not made by Christ, such as abstinence from meat on fastdays, quoting the words: Not that which goeth into the mouth, defileth a man. It is true, no food taken in moderation and with the pure intention of strengthening and preserving physical strength, defiles a man, but the interior bad disposition, the disobedience to the Church which Christ has commanded us to hear, this defiles a man, and makes him commit sin. Be obedient to your holy Church which, directed by the Holy Spirit of God, as a good mother, seeks always what is best for you.

THURSDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Jer.* vii. 1—7.) In those days: The word that came to Jeremias from the Lord, saying: Stand in the gate of the house of the Lord, and proclaim there this word, and say: Hear ye the word of the Lord, all ye men of Juda, that enter in at these gates, to adore the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Make your ways and your doings good; and I will dwell with you in this place. Trust not in lying words, saying: The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, it is the temple of the Lord. For if you will order well your ways and your doings; if you will execute judgment between a man and his neighbour, if you oppress not the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, and walk not after strange gods to your own hurt: I will dwell with you in this place; in the land which I gave to your fathers from the beginning and for evermore, saith the Lord Almighty.

EXPLANATION. The Jews believed themselves pleasing to God, because they had in Jerusalem the temple of the true God, and kept the rules, prescribed for the external service of the temple. This mistake is removed by the prophet who, by the command of God, shows them, that he only finds favor in the eyes of God, who unites with this outward observance, the intention of

pleasing God only, and practises works of justice and mercy. Thus many Catholics observe everything belonging to the external worship and the customs of the Church, but at the same time pay no attention to real conversion of the heart. Therefore, being a member of the Church, and showing yourself outwardly such, will not make you holy and save you, but you must live piously and sacredly according to the spirit of the Church.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* iv. 38—44.) At that time: Jesus rising up out of the synagogue, went into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever, and they besought him for her. And standing over her, he commanded the fever, and it left her. And immediately rising,

she ministered to them. And when the sun was down, all they that had any sick with divers diseases, brought them to him. But he laying his hands on every one of them, healed them. And devils went out from many, crying out and saying: Thou art the Son of God. And he rebuking them, suffered them not to speak, for they knew that he was Christ. And when it was day, going out he went into a desert place; and the multitude sought him, and came to him; and they prayed him that he should not depart from them. To whom he said: To other cities I must preach the kingdom of God: for therefore am I sent. And he was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.

INSTRUCTION. By the fever of St. Peter's mother in law, which Christ cured, St. Ambrose understands the fever-heat of impure lust. If you, my Christian, suffer from this dangerous fever, bring Christ into the house of your soul, that is, receive Him often in holy Communion, for holy Communion is the crown of the elect, the wine from which the virgins spring. (*Zach.* ix.) The virginal flesh of the Lord extinguishes the heat of lust, and enkindles the fire of the pure love of God; this the Scriptures teach, and daily experience proves.

FRIDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Num.* xx. 2—13.) In those days: The children of Israel came together against Moses and Aaron; and making a sedition, they said: Give us water to drink. And Moses and Aaron leaving the multitude, went into the tabernacle of the covenant, and fell flat upon the ground, and cried to the Lord and said: O Lord God, hear the cry of this people, and open to them thy treasure, a fountain of living water, that being satisfied, they may cease to murmur. And the glory of the Lord appeared over them. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Take the rod and assemble the people together, thou and Aaron thy brother, and speak to the rock before them, and it shall yield waters. And when thou hast brought forth water out of the rock, all the multitude and their cattle shall drink. Moses therefore took the rod, which was before the Lord, as he had commanded him, and having gathered together the multitude before the rock, he said to them: Hear, ye rebellious and incredulous: can we bring you

forth water out of this rock? And when Moses had lifted up his hand, and struck the rock twice with the rod, there came forth water in great abundance, so that the people and their cattle drank. And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron: Because you have not believed me, to sanctify me before the children of Israel, you shall not bring these people into the land which I will give them. This is the water of contradiction, where the children of Israel strove with words against the Lord, and he was sanctified in them.

INSTRUCTION. Great and innumerable were the graces God had already given to the people of Israel, and small their gratitude for them. How many graces for body and soul, God has also given you, and where are the thanks you owe Him? Will you be worse than the beasts who have not reason? "Whose face," says St. Ambrose, "will not flush, that he has not thanked his benefactor, when he sees, that even the animals fly from the name of the ungrateful?

GOSPEL. (*John* iv. 5—42.) At that time: Jesus came to a city of Samaria which is called Sichar; near the land which Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well. It was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus saith to her: Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone into the city to buy meats.) Then that Samaritan woman saith to him: How dost thou, being a Jew, ask of me to drink, who am a Samaritan woman? For the Jews do not communicate with the Samaritans. Jesus answered, and said to her: If thou didst know the gift of God, and who he is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou perhaps wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith to him: Sir, thou hast nothing wherein to draw, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said to her: Whosoever drinketh of this water, shall thirst again: but he that shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall not thirst for ever. But the water

that I shall give him, shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into life everlasting. The woman saith to him: Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come hither to draw. Jesus saith to her: Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered, and said: I have no husband. Jesus saith to her: Thou hast said well, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands: and he whom thou now hast, is not thy husband. This thou hast said truly. The woman saith to him: Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers adored on this mountain, and you say, that at Jerusalem is the place where men must adore. Jesus saith to her: Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when you shall neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, adore the Father. You adore that which you know not; we adore that which we know: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth. For the Father also seeketh such to adore him. God is a spirit, and they that adore him, must adore him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith to him: I know that the Messias cometh (who is called Christ), therefore when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith to her: I am he, who am speaking with thee. And immediately his disciples came: and they wondered that he talked with the woman. Yet no man said: What seekest thou, or why talkest thou with her? The woman therefore left her water-pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men there: Come, and see a man who hath told me all things whatsoever I have done. Is not he the Christ? They went therefore out of the city, and came unto him. In the mean time the disciples prayed him, saying: Rabbi, eat. But he said to them: I have meat to eat which you know not of. The disciples therefore said one to another: Hath any man brought him to eat? Jesus saith to them: My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, that I may perfect his work. Do not you say, there are yet four months, and then the harvest cometh? Behold, I say to you,

lift up your eyes, and see the countries, for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth, receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life everlasting: that both he that soweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice together. For in this is that saying true: that it is one man that soweth, and it is another that reapeth. I have sent you to reap that in which you did not labour: others have laboured, and you have entered into their labours. Now of that city many of the Samaritans believed in him, for the word of the woman giving testimony: he told me all things whatsoever I have done. So when the Samaritans were come to him, they desired him that he would tarry there. And he abode there two days. And many more believed in him because of his own word. And they said to the woman: We now believe, not for thy saying: for we ourselves have seen him, and know that he is indeed the Saviour of the world.

EXPLANATION. The living water which Jesus says, quenches the thirst forever, is the stream of grace, continually flowing through the Sacraments of the Church, from the inexhaustible merits of Christ, which purifies from sin, puts out the fire of evil desires, quiets the thirst for eternal joys, and renders our will fertile in the performance of good works. As often as we receive the holy Sacraments with lively faith in Jesus, and with the ardent desire for His graces, so often do we drink from this stream, to which we are invited by the Church also, in these words: "Come and draw water with joy, out of the Saviour's fountain." (*Isai* xii. 13.) When saying that God is a spirit, who must therefore be adored in spirit and in truth, Jesus rebukes the Jews who, as has been already observed, directed their attention only to the external ceremonies and customs of the Church, and forgot the true conversion of their hearts, as well as the Samaritans who built a temple on Mount Garizim, arbitrarily arranged their form of worship, and frequently mixed it with heathen superstition. The will of His Father, to redeem and sanctify man, was the food of Jesus. So you also let your nourishment be the will of God, who requires of you to love Him with all your heart, and to keep His commandments.

SATURDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Dan.* xiii. 1—62.) In those days: There was a man that dwelt in Babylon, and his name was Joakim: and

he took a wife whose name was Susanna, the daughter of Helcias, a very beautiful woman, and one that feared God. For her parents being just, had instructed their daughter according to the law of Moses. Now Joakim was very rich, and had an orchard near his house; and the Jews resorted to him, because he was the most honourable of them all. And there were two of the ancients of the people, appointed judges that year, of whom the Lord said: Iniquity came out from Babylon from the ancient judges, that seemed to govern the people. These men frequented the house of Joakim, and all that had any matters of judgment, came to them. And when the people departed away at noon, Susanna went in, and walked in her husband's orchard. And the old men saw her going in every day, and walking: and they were inflamed with lust towards her: and they perverted their own mind, and turned away their eyes that they might not look unto heaven, nor remember just judgments. So they were both wounded with the love of her, yet they did not make known their grief one to the other: for they were ashamed to declare to one another their lust, being desirous to have to do with her: and they watched carefully every day to see her. And one said to the other: Let us now go home, for it is dinner time. So going out, they departed one from another. And turning back again, they came both to the same place: and asking one another the cause, they acknowledged their lust: and then they agreed together upon a time when they might find her alone. And it fell out, as they watched a fit day, she went in on a time, as yesterday and the day before, with two maids only, and was desirous to wash herself in the orchard: for it was hot weather. And there was nobody there, but the two old men that had hid themselves and were considering her. So she said to the maids: Bring me oil, and washing balls, and shut the doors of the orchard, that I may wash me. And they did as she bade them: and they shut the doors of the orchard, and went out by a back door to fetch what she had commanded them, and they knew not that the elders were hid within. Now when the maids were gone forth, the two elders arose, and ran to her, and said: Behold, the doors of the orchard are shut, and nobody seeth us, and we are in love with thee, wherefore consent to

us, and lie with us. But if thou wilt not, we will bear witness against thee, that a young man was with thee, and therefore thou didst send away thy maids from thee. Susanna sighed, and said: I am straitened on every side: for if I do this thing, it is death to me: and if I do it not, I shall not escape your hands. But it is better for me to fall into your hands without doing it, than to sin in the sight of the Lord. With that Susanna cried out with a loud voice: and the elders also cried out against her. And one of them ran to the door of the orchard, and opened it. So when the servants of the house heard the cry in the orchard, they rushed in by the back door to see what was the matter. But after the old men had spoken, the servants were greatly ashamed, for never had there been any such word said of Susanna. And on the next day, when the people were come to Joakim her husband, the two elders also came, full of their wicked device against Susanna, to put her to death. And they said before the people: Send to Susanna, daughter of Helcias, the wife of Joakim. And they presently sent. And she came with her parents, and children, and all her kindred. Now Susanna was exceeding delicate, and beautiful to behold. But those wicked men commanded that her face should be uncovered (for she was covered), that so at least they might be satisfied with her beauty. Therefore her friends and all her acquaintance wept. But the two elders, rising up in the midst of the people, laid their hands upon her head. And she weeping looked up to heaven, for her heart had confidence in the Lord. And the elders said: As we walked in the orchard alone, this woman came in with two maids, and shut the doors of the orchard, and sent away the maids from her. Then a young man that was there hid, came to her, and lay with her. But we that were in the corner of the orchard, seeing this wickedness, ran up to them, and we saw them lie together. And as for him we could not take him, because he was stronger than we, and opening the doors he leaped out, but having taken this woman, we asked who the young man was, but she would not tell us: of this thing we are witnesses. The multitude believed them, as being the elders and judges of the people, and they condemned her to death. Then Susanna cried out with a loud voice, and said: O eternal

God, who knowest hidden things, who knowest all things before they come to pass, thou knowest that they have borne false witness against me: and behold, I must die, whereas I have done none of these things, which these men have maliciously forged against me. And the Lord heard her voice. And when she was led to be put to death, the Lord raised up the holy spirit of a young boy, whose name was Daniel: and he cried out with a loud voice: I am clear from the blood of this woman. Then all the people turning towards him, said: What meaneth this word that thou hast spoken? But he standing in the midst of them, said: Are ye so foolish, ye children of Israel, that without examination or knowledge of the truth, ye have condemned a daughter of Israel? Return to judgment, for they have borne false witness against her. So all the people turned again in haste, and the old men said to him: Come and sit thou down among us, and shew it us: seeing God hath given thee the honor of old age. And Daniel said to the people: Separate these two far from one another, and I will examine them. So when they were put asunder one from the other, he called one of them and said to him: O thou that art grown old in evil days, now are thy sins come out which thou hast committed before: in judging unjust judgments, oppressing the innocent, and letting the guilty go free, whereas the Lord saith: the innocent and the just thou shalt not kill. Now then, if thou sawest her, tell me under what tree thou sawest them conversing together. He said: under a mastick tree. And Daniel said: Well hast thou lied against thy own head: for behold, the angel of God having received the sentence of him, shall cut thee in two. And having put him aside, he commanded that the other should come, and he said to him: O thou seed of Chanaan, and not of Juda, beauty hath deceived thee and lust hath perverted thy heart: thus did you do as to the daughters of Israel, and they for fear conversed with you; but a daughter of Juda would not abide your wickedness. Now, therefore, tell me under what tree didst thou take them conversing together? And he answered: under a holm tree. And Daniel said to him: Well hast thou also lied against thy own head; for the angel of the Lord waiteth with a sword to cut thee in two, and to destroy thee.

With that all the assembly cried out with a loud voice, and they blessed God, who saveth them that trust in him. And they rose up against the two elders (for Daniel had convicted them of false witness by their own mouth) and they did to them as they had maliciously dealt against their neighbor, to fulfil the law of Moses: and they put them to death, and innocent blood was saved in that day.

INSTRUCTION. All the impious who walk as did these two lustinflamed judges, say: Who seeth me? Darkness compasseth me about, and the walls cover me, and no man seeth me: whom do I fear? The Most High will not remember my sins (*Eccl.* xxiii. 25. 26.), and St. Bernard answers them: "Be it so, no man sees you, not one. You are seen by the evil angel; you are seen by the good angel. You are seen by Him who is greater than good or evil angel, God. You are seen by the accuser, the multitude of witnesses see you; the judge Himself at whose judgment-seat you will one day stand, sees you; to be willing to do wrong under His eyes, is as insane as it is terrible to fall into the hands of the living God." Take these words earnestly to heart, O Christian, and like Susanna let not the fear of God ever depart from your heart, for it is ever better to lose all, even life, than a single soul by one grievous sin.

GOSPEL. (*John* viii. 1—11.) At that time: Jesus went to mount Olivet. And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came to him, and sitting down he taught them. And the Scribes and Pharisees bring unto him a woman taken in adultery; and they set her in the midst, and said to him: Master, this woman was even now taken in adultery. Now Moses in the law commanded us to stone such a one. But what sayest thou? And this they said tempting him, that they might accuse him. But Jesus bowing himself down, wrote with his finger on the ground. When therefore they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said to them: He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again stooping down, he wrote on the ground. But they hearing this, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, and Jesus alone remained, and the woman standing in the midst. Then Jesus lifting up himself, said to her: Woman, where are they that accused thee? Hath no man condemned thee? Who said: No

man, Lord. And Jesus said: Neither will I condemn thee. Go, and now sin no more.

EXPLANATION. In the preceding lesson the example of a pious, chaste woman, whom God wonderfully rescued from the hands of her malicious enemiēs, is placed before us: in the gospel is shown a great, but penitent sinner, whom Christ rescued from eternal death by forgiving her sins. O how merciful is Jesus, and how unmerciful are the Christians, who, like the Pharisees, condemn every sinner at once, not considering, they themselves are sinners and in need of mercy, and the greatest of sinners even, if he truly repents, may become the greatest of saints. "What does God more hate and abominate," says St. Dorotheus, "than rash judgments, as all our forefathers declare? Indeed, they counted nothing worse, nothing more hateful, than the condemnation of one's neighbor." Remember, O Christian, that to Him only belongs judgment, to whom the Father has given all judgment, to the Son of God, and do not forget the words of the Apostle: He that thinketh himself to stand, let him take heed, lest he fall. (i. *Cor.* x. 12.)

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT. (LÆTARE.)

THE Introit of this day's Mass which begins with the word Laetare, is as follows: Rejoice, Jerusalem, and meet together all you who love her; rejoice exceedingly, you who have been in sorrow, that you may leap for joy, and be satiated with comfort from her breast. (*Isai.* lxvii. 10. 11.) I rejoiced at the things that were said to me: we will go into the house of the Lord. (*Ps.* cxxi.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, O Almighty God, that we, who are justly afflicted according to our demerits, may be relieved by Thy comforting grace. Through, &c.

EPISTLE. (*Gal.* iv. 22—31.) BRETHREN: It is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bond-woman, and the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bond-woman, was born according to the flesh: but he by the free-woman, was by promise. Which things are said by an allegory. For these are the two testaments. The one from Mount Sina, engendering unto bondage; which is Agar: for

Sina is a mountain in Arabia, which hath affinity to that Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But that Jerusalem, which is above, is free; which is our mother. For it is written: "Rejoice, thou barren, that bearest not: break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for many are the children of the desolate, more than of her that hath a husband." Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then, he that was born according to the flesh, persecuted him that was after the spirit: so also it is now. But what saith the scripture? "Cast out the bond-woman and her son: for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman." So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free, by the freedom wherewith Christ hath made us free.

EXPLANATION. It was the common custom, in the days of the patriarchs, among the nations, for a man to have more than one wife. This was permitted by God, partly because they and their descendants would hardly have been satisfied with one marriage (*Matt.* xix. 8.), partly because bigamy was a means of promoting the increase of the people of Israel, typical of the future increase of the children of God. Thus Abraham had two wives, who had each a son; of these Ismael was born to Abraham from his bond-woman Agar, in the natural way; the other, Isaac, the son of the free wife Sara, was born in a supernatural manner according to the promise (*Gen.* xviii. 11. 14.), that she although aged would, by the grace of God, give birth to a son. These two women with their sons were types, as St. Paul says, of the two Testaments: Agar the bond-woman, the Old, Sara, the free woman, the New Testament; the son of Agar, the Jews, the son of Sara, the Christians; for the Jews, like Ismael, are descendants of Abraham by natural descent, but the Christians, like Isaac, by grace. The Old Testament gave birth only to servants; for the Jews, the Jewish Church, obeyed the commandments of God only from fear of punishment, and hope of temporal reward; the New Testament, the Jerusalem from above, that is, the Christian Church, gives birth to children, who willingly and from love obey God's commandments. And although the Christian Church, the New Jerusalem, chosen from heathenism, was in the beginning barren, as Sara, she gives birth, by the grace of God and through His apostles, to more children than the Jewish Church, so long the Church of God, that is, more were converted to Christianity from the gentiles than from the Jews, who even hated and persecuted the Christians, as did Ismael his brother Isaac. For their hardness of heart they were cast out by God, like Agar and her son; that is, after the destruction of Jerusalem the Jews were

dispersed to all parts of the world. Let us, therefore, give God thanks, that through Jesus we have become the free children of God, who from love fulfil His holy will, by which we will be saved.

ASPIRATION. Give me the grace, O Jesus, that by prayer and fasting, and patience in all adversities and persecutions, I may be made less unworthy of Thy passion, and like to Thee, that I may not, one day, as an ill behaved child be cast out by Thee, but become worthy of Thy divine promise and Thy eternal consolation in the heavenly Jerusalem.

GOSPEL. (*John* vi. 1—15.) At that time: Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is that of Tiberias: and a

great multitude followed him, because they saw the miracles which he did on them that were diseased. Jesus therefore went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. Now the pasch, the festival day of the Jews, was near at hand. When Jesus therefore had lifted up his eyes, and seen that a very great multitude cometh to him, he said to Philip: Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat? And this he said to try him: for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him: Two hundred penny-worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, saith to him: There is a boy here that hath five barley loaves, and two fishes; but what are they among so many? Then Jesus said: Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. The men therefore sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to them that were sat down. In like manner also of the fishes, as much as they would, and when they were filled, he said to his disciples: Gather up the fragments that remain, lest they be lost. They gathered up therefore, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above to them that had eaten. Now these men, when they had seen what a miracle Jesus had done, said: This is of a truth the prophet that is to come into the world. Jesus therefore when he knew that they would come to take him by force and make him king, fled again into the mountain himself alone.

Why did Christ try St. Philip?

To test his faith and trust; to instruct us that before seeking supernatural means, we should first look for natural ways of providing; that the miracle of the multiplying of the loaves should be more marvellous to the people from their having seen there was no provision there; and that we may learn to trust in God, who is a helper in due time in tribulation. (*Ps.* ix. 10.)

Of what signs did Christ make use in this miracle, and why?

According to St. Matthew (xiv. 19.) He lifted up His eyes to heaven, by which He showed, that all good gifts come from above,

and that it is God who opens His hands and fills us with all blessings; He gave thanks, thus teaching us to give God thanks for all His blessings. "The table," says St. Chrysostom, "that is met and is left with prayer, will never know want, but the more richly yield its gifts." He blessed the bread, showing us that the divine blessing increases all.

Why did Christ require them to gather up the fragments that were left?

That they should not be stepped upon and destroyed; that the greatness of the miracle should be evidenced by the quantity of the fragments; and that we might learn to honor the gifts of God, even the most insignificant, and if we do not ourselves need them, to save them for the poor.

Why did Christ, after this miracle, fly from the people?

Because after this miracle the people recognized the Messiah in Him, and would have made Him king, and He wished to teach us, that we should fly from praise and honor, and in all our actions should seek not our own glory, but God's.

CONSOLATION IN POVERTY.

THis gospel which relates the provision Christ unasked makes for those who follow and listen to Him, is indeed consoling for the poor. God, from the world's beginning, has always cared for His own. For the aid and comfort of His chosen people in time of famine, God sent Joseph, the son of the Patriarch Jacob, in advance into Egypt (*Gen.* xlv. 5.); for forty years He fed the children of Israel in the desert with bread from heaven (*Deut.* viii.); He fed the Prophet Elias by a raven (iii. *Kings* xviii. 6.); and thought of Daniel in the lions' den. (*Dan.* xiv. 37.) And in the New Testament God shows His merciful care for His own, because in their sorest need, by angel, man, or animal, He fed them in marvellous ways, as we see also frequently in the lives of the saints. Truly has David therefore said: God forsakes not the just (I have been young and am now old; and I have not seen the just forsaken, nor his seed seeking bread (*Ps.* xxxvi. 25.), that is, one who sincerely serves Him, and who, as Christ commands, seeks before all the kingdom of God and His justice. (*Luke* xiii. 31.) But those who do not this, need not promise themselves much from God, for he who abandons God, will be abandoned by God, who provides only for His own true children. Strive to be a good child, and you will have God for your father, and with King David can cast the care upon the Lord, and He will sustain thee. At the same time to receive help, you must not think it enough for you to pray and trust in God, He demands that you should use your strength to work, for if any man will not work, neither let him eat. (ii. *Thess.* iii. 10.)

ASPIRATION. In Thy omnipotence and goodness alone, O my God, I put my trust, firmly believing that if I fear Thee, serve Thee faithfully, and avoid evil, I shall not be abandoned in poverty, but receive many good things. Amen.

INSTRUCTION ON PREPARATION FOR EASTER.

Now the pasch, the festival day of the Jews, was near at hand. (*John* vi. 4.)

IF we would sing a joyful Alleluia with the Church on the festival of Easter, we must fulfil her desire, and prepare ourselves for its worthy celebration. Therefore, we should shun improper, noisy meetings, and go often into solitude to pray, especially to meditate on the bitter sufferings of the Savior, for when man is alone, God speaks to his heart (*Osee* ii. 14.); we should carefully examine our conscience, and consider how we stand before God, for upon this day shall be the expiation for you, and the cleansing from all your sins: you shall be cleansed before the Lord: for it is a Sabbath of rest, and you shall afflict your souls, that is, by fasting, watching, and praying prepare them. (*Lev.* xvi. 30—31.) From now until Easter we should fast more strictly, give more alms to the poor if we are able, or if poor ourselves, bear our poverty more patiently, offering it to Christ in union with His poverty, His hunger and thirst, &c.; we should make a sincere and contrite confession, and purify our heart from the old leaven of iniquity, that we may keep the Easter meal with Christ in the unleavened bread of purity and truth. (i. *Cor.* v. 7. 8.) For this end we should incite ourselves to holy desires, to rise spiritually with Christ from sin, which is the death of the soul.

MONDAY IN THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (iii. *Kings* i. 16—28.) IN THOSE DAYS: Two women that were harlots, came to king Solomon, and stood before him: and one of them said: I beseech thee, my Lord, I and this woman dwelt in one house, and I was delivered of a child with her in the chamber. And the third day after that I was delivered, she also was delivered; and we were together and no other person with us in the house, only we two. And this woman's child died in the night. For in her sleep she overlaid him. And rising in the dead time of the night, she took my child from my side, while thy handmaid was asleep, and laid it in her bosom: and laid her dead child in my bosom. And when I rose in the morning to give my

child suck, behold, it was dead; but considering him more diligently when it was clear day, I found that it was not mine which I bore. And the other woman answered: It is not so as thou sayest, but thy child is dead, and mine is alive. On the contrary she said: Thou liest: for my child liveth, and thy child is dead. And in this manner they strove before the king. Then said the king: The one saith, my child is alive, and thy child is dead. And the other answereth, Nay, but thy child is dead, and mine liveth. The king therefore said: Bring me a sword. And when they had brought a sword before the king: Divide, said he, the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. But the woman, whose child was alive, said to the king (for her bowels were moved upon her child), I beseech thee, my Lord, give her the child alive and do not kill it. But the other said: Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. The king answered and said: Give the living child to this woman, and let it not be killed, for she is the mother thereof. And all Israel heard the judgment which the king had judged, and they feared the king, seeing that the wisdom of God was in him to do judgment.

INSTRUCTION. When a sinful life is led, one sin usually gives rise to another. Thus one of these wretched women was not afraid to lie impudently, and to propose the death of her companion's child, not thinking that we can lie to man, but cannot deceive God. Guard, O Christian, against the first step to sin, and consider that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (*Prov.* i. 7.), the foundation of a pious, godly life.

GOSPEL. (*John* ii. 13—25.) At that time: The pasch of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and he found in the temple them that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money sitting. And when he had made as it were a scourge of little cords, he drove them all out of the temple, the sheep also and the oxen, and the money of the changers he poured out, and the tables he overthrew. And he said to them that sold doves: Take these things hence, and make not the house of my Father a house of traffic. And his disciples remembered that it was written: "The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up." Then the Jews

answered, and said to him: What sign dost thou shew us seeing thou dost these things? Jesus answered, and said to them: Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. The Jews then said: Six and forty years was this temple in building, and wilt thou raise it in three days? But he spoke of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen again from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture, and the word that Jesus had said. Now when he was at Jerusalem, at the pasch, upon the festival day, many believed in his name seeing his signs which he did. But Jesus did not trust himself to them, because he knew all men, and because he needed not that any should give testimony of man, for he knew what was in man.

INSTRUCTION. Like Jesus we also should be eaten up by zeal for the house of God, that is, we should endeavor always to appear in Church, before the face of God, with a heart purified from all worldly, revengeful, envious, proud, and sensual thoughts; giving ourselves to God with all reverence in devotion, aiding with all our power to keep the house of God always neat, and the necessary decorations for the services properly provided. Whatever is done with good motives for the adornment of the Church, is done for Christ Himself, who, day and night, dwells there, in the most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

TUESDAY IN THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Exod.* xxxii. 7—14.) In those days: The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Go, get thee down: thy people, which thou hast brought out of the land of Egypt, has sinned. They have quickly strayed from the way which thou didst shew them, and they have made to themselves a molten calf, and have adored it, and sacrificing victims to it, have said: These are thy gods, O Israel, that have brought thee out of the land of Egypt. And again the Lord said to Moses: I see that this people is stiff-necked: let me alone, that my wrath may be kindled against them, and that I may destroy them, and I will make of thee a great nation. But Moses besought the Lord his God, saying: Why, O Lord, is thy indignation enkindled against thy people, whom thou hast brought out of the land of Egypt, with great power, and with a mighty

hand? Let not the Egyptians say, I beseech thee: He craftily brought them out, that he might kill them in the mountains, and destroy them from the earth: let thy anger cease, and be appeased upon the wickedness of thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou sworest by thy own self, saying: I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven: and this whole land that I have spoken of, I will give to your seed, and you shall possess it for ever. And the Lord was appeased from doing the evil which he had spoken against his people.

INSTRUCTION. This lesson caused St. Ambrose to marvel at the great meekness of Moses who, forgetting all the wrongs done to him by the people of Israel, declined God's offer to make him the leader of another great people, and so fervently prayed for the Israelites, that they loved him for his meekness more than they wondered at his great deeds. Practise always this virtue, O Christian, to which Jesus Himself invites us: Learn from me, because I am meek, and, Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land, that is, they shall win the hearts of their fellow men.

GOSPEL. (*John* vii. 14—31.) At that time: About the midst of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple and taught. And the Jews wondered, saying: How doth this man know letters, having never learned? Jesus answered them, and said: My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do the will of him, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh the glory of him that sent him, he is true, and there is no injustice in him. Did not Moses give you the law? and yet none of you keepeth the law. Why seek you to kill me? The multitude answered and said: Thou hast a devil: Who seeketh to kill thee? Jesus answered, and said to them: One work I have done: and you all wonder: therefore Moses gave you circumcision: (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers,) and on the Sabbath-day you circumcise a man. If a man receive circumcision on the Sabbath-day, that the law of Moses may not be broken; are you angry at me, because I have healed the whole man on the Sabbath-day?

Judge not according to the appearance, but judge just judgment. Some therefore of Jerusalem said: Is not this he whom they seek to kill? And behold, he speaketh openly, and they say nothing to him. Have the rulers known for a truth that this is the Christ? But we know this man whence he is; but when the Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is. Jesus therefore cried out in the temple, teaching and saying: You both know me, and you know whence I am: and I am not come of myself; but he that sent me is true, whom you know not, I know him, because I am from him, and he hath sent me. They sought therefore to apprehend him: and no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come. But of the people many believed in him.

EXPLANATION. He who has always faithfully followed it, has always experienced in himself the truth of Jesus' words, that His doctrine is from God, for it alone contents the desire of the soul for knowledge, peace, and happiness. The Savior further proves the divinity of His doctrine by saying, He sought not His own glory, but His Father's. All the inventors of error's new doctrines are usually impelled by the spirit of pride, seeking only their own glory, thus plainly showing that the Spirit of God works not with them. Had the Jews but taken these words of Christ to heart, they would not have judged Him so unjustly, nor have reproached Him for healing the sick on the Sabbath, since they even circumcised on that day. But hatred, prejudice, and envy blinded the Jews, so that they did not recognize Christ's divine mission, and even sought to kill Him. O how happy is the man who believes in Jesus, and walks by His doctrine, sweet peace is his here, and nameless glory there!

WEDNESDAY IN THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Isai.* i. 16—19.) Thus saith the Lord God: Wash yourselves, be clean, take away the evil of your devices from my eyes: cease to do perversely, learn to do well: seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge for the fatherless, defend the widow. And then come, and accuse me, saith the Lord: if your sins be as the scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow: and if they be red as crimson, they shall be white as wool. If you be willing, and will hearken to me, you shall eat the good things of the land, saith the Lord Almighty.

EXPLANATION. In this lesson God by the prophet plainly shows, that He forgives and forgets all the sins of the man who firmly resolves to depart from his perverse ways, to purify his heart, and turn penitently to God. Grace and forgiveness follow only the sincere change of heart. This should be borne in mind by all those who think, that all is accomplished when the forms of sorrow are complied with without devotion, and a careless relation of the sins in confession, like the Jews who fancied, that by frequently washing their hands, they would be pure.

GOSPEL. (*John* ix. 1—38.) At that time: Jesus passing by, saw a man that was blind from his birth; and his disciples asked him: Rabbi, who hath sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind? Jesus answered:

Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me, whilst it is day: the night cometh when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When he had said these things, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and spread the clay upon his eyes, and said to him: Go, wash in the pool of Siloe, which is interpreted, Sent. He went his way therefore, and washed, and he came seeing. The neighbors therefore, and they who had seen him before, that he was a beggar, said: Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said: This is he. But others said: No, but he is like him. But he said: I am he. They said therefore to him: How were thine eyes opened? He answered: That man that is called Jesus, made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said to me: Go to the pool of Siloe, and wash. And I went, I washed, and I see. And they said to him: Where is he? He saith: I know not. They bring him that had been blind to the Pharisees. Now it was the Sabbath, when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. Again therefore the Pharisees asked him how he had received his sight. But he said to them: He put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and I see. Some therefore of the Pharisees said: This man is not of God who keepeth not the Sabbath. But others said: How can a man that is a sinner, do such miracles? And there was a division among them. They say therefore to the blind man again: What sayest thou of him that hath opened thy eyes? And he said: He is a prophet. The Jews then did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and had received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight, and asked them, saying: Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then doth he now see? His parents answered them, and said: We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: but how he now seeth, we know not: or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: ask himself; he is of age; let him speak for himself. These things

his parents said, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had already agreed among themselves, that if any man should confess him to be Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore did his parents say: He is of age, ask him. They therefore called the man again that had been blind, and said to him: Give glory to God, We know that this man is a sinner. He said then to them: If he be a sinner, I know not: one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. Then they said to him: What did he to thee? How did he open thy eyes? He answered them: I have told you already, and you have heard: why would you hear it again: will you also become his disciples? They reviled him, therefore, and said: Be thou his disciple; but we are the disciples of Moses. We know that God spoke to Moses: but as to this man, we know not from whence he is. The man answered, and said to them: Why, herein is a wonderful thing, that you know not from whence he is, and he hath opened my eyes. Now we know that God doth not hear sinners; but if a man be a server of God, and doth his will, him he heareth. From the beginning of the world it hath not been heard, that any man hath opened the eyes of one born blind. Unless this man were of God, he could not do any thing. They answered, and said to him: Thou wast wholly born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said to him: Dost thou believe in the Son of God? He answered, and said: Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him? And Jesus said to him: Thou hast both seen him: and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said: I believe, Lord. And falling down, he adored him.

EXPLANATION. It was the universal opinion of the Jews, that bodily disease was the consequence of the sins either of the sufferer or of his parents; although this is often, it is not always the truth, as in the case of this blind man, in whom Christ was to manifest His divine power and His mission to save man. The day in which Christ was to do the work of His Father, was the day of His life on earth; in the night, after death, no one can longer do anything meritorious for the honor of God and for the salvation

of his own soul. The healing of the blind man showed Jesus to be the light of the world, which dispels physical and spiritual darkness; for with light to his eyes, the poor beggar received the light of faith in Christ, as well. For the Pharisees their eyes were not opened, pride kept them closed. In their sight Jesus was a sinner, and because they could in no other way deny the miracle, they made the loveless declaration, that God hears not the prayers of a sinner, and this, when God never casts away the repenting prayer of the sinner, and when Christ was sinless and could not be accused of a sin.—Learn from this, O Christian, to scorn the terrible malice of sin, and to emulate the poor blind man, who so readily received the light of faith, and from the profession of which he could be deterred by no persecution on the part of Christ' enemies.

THURSDAY IN THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (iv. *Kings* iv. 25—38.) In those days: A Sunamitess came to Eliseus on mount Carmel; and when the man of God saw her coming towards him, he said to Giezi his servant: Behold that Sunamitess. Go therefore to meet her, and say to her: Is all well with thee, and with thy husband, and with thy son? And she answered: Well. And when she came to the man of God to the mount, she caught hold on his feet: and Giezi came to remove her. And the man of God said: Let her alone, for her soul is in anguish, and the Lord hath hid it from me, and hath not told me. And she said to him: Did I ask a son of my Lord? Did I not say to thee: Do not deceive me? Then he said to Giezi: Gird up thy loins, and take up my staff in thy hand, and go. If any man meet thee, salute him not: and if any man salute thee, answer him not: and lay my staff upon the face of the child. But the mother of the child said: As the Lord liveth, and as my soul liveth, I will not leave thee. He arose, therefore, and followed her. But Giezi was gone before them and laid the staff upon the face of the child, and there was no voice nor sense: and he returned to meet him, and told him, saying: The child is not risen. Eliseus therefore went into the house, and behold, the child lay dead on his bed. And going in, he shut the door upon him, and upon the child, and prayed to the Lord. And he went up, and lay upon the child: and he put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he bowed himself

upon him, and the child's flesh grew warm. Then he returned and walked in the house, once to and fro: and he went up and lay upon him: and the child gaped seven times, and opened his eyes. And he called Giezi, and said to him: Call this Sunamitess. And she being called, went in to him. And he said: Take up thy son. She came and fell at his feet, and worshipped upon the ground, and took up her son, and went out. And Eliseus returned to Galgal.

EXPLANATION. The raising to life, by the Prophet Eliseus, of the widow's dead son, says St. Augustine, was a prototype of the redemption of mankind by Jesus from the death of sin. "Eliseus," he writes, "came, and went up to the chamber, Christ came, and ascended the cross; Eliseus bowed down to raise the boy, Christ humbled Himself to raise the world lying in sin; Eliseus laid his eyes and mouth on the eyes and mouth of the boy. How that man of ripe age, beloved brethren, contracted himself, that he might conform himself to the boy lying there! That which Eliseus prototyped in this boy, Christ fulfilled for the whole of mankind. As the apostle says: He humbled Himself, and became obedient even unto death."—O let us be grateful to Jesus who has raised us from sin to eternal life, and made us God's children!

GOSPEL. (*Luke* vii. 11—16.) At that time: Jesus went into a city called Naim: and there went with him his disciples, and a great multitude. And when he came nigh to the city, behold, a dead man was carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow: and much people of the city were with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said to her: Weep not. And he came near and touched the bier. And they that carried it, stood still. And he said: Young man, I say to thee, arise. And he that was dead, sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother. And there came a fear on them all: and they glorified God, saying: A great prophet is risen up amongst us, and God hath visited his people.

INSTRUCTION. St. Ambrose and St. Augustine by the widow, mother of the dead youth, understand in a spiritual sense, the Church mourning for her children, who by a grievous sin have lost the life of the soul, that is, the grace of God, and entreating the Lord with prayers and tears, to come again and give grace and life to them. And Jesus comes, touches the sinner with His

cross, that is, by external and internal sufferings exhorts him to penance, assists him to subdue his evil passions, takes away his sin, gives him grace once more, and the sinner lives again, does good, so that all who see his conversion, praise and glorify God. Thank God, that you are a child of His holy Church, by whose intercession Christ even now raises the spiritually dead to life.

FRIDAY IN THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (iii. *Kings* xvii. 17—24.) In those days: The son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick, and the sickness was very grievous, so that there was no breath left in him. And she said to Elias: What have I to do with thee, thou man of God? Art thou come to me, that my iniquities should be remembered, and that thou shouldst kill my son? And Elias said to her: Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him into the upper chamber where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. And he cried to the Lord and said: O Lord, my God, hast thou afflicted also the widow, with whom I am after a sort maintained, so as to kill her son? And he stretched, and measured himself upon the child three times, and cried to the Lord and said: O Lord my God, let the soul of this child, I beseech thee, return into his body. And the Lord heard the voice of Elias: and the soul of the child returned unto him, and he revived. And Elias took the child, and brought him down from the upper chamber to the house below, and delivered him to his mother, and said to her: Behold, thy son liveth. And the woman said to Elias: Now, by this I know thou art a man of God, and the word of the Lord in thy mouth is true.

INSTRUCTION. St. Theodoret ascribes the grace of the restoration of her boy to life by the Prophet Elias, to the humility and penance with which the widow accused herself as the cause of the child's death. Remember that God despises not an humble and contrite heart, and bear the afflictions with which He visits you, in humble patience and in the spirit of penance, until it pleases Him to take them from you.

GOSPEL. (*John* xi. 1—45.) At that time: There was a certain man sick, named Lazarus, of Bethania, of the town of Mary, and of Martha her sister. (And Mary was she that anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with

her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) His sisters therefore sent to him, saying: Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. And Jesus hearing it, said to them: This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God: that the Son of God may be glorified by it. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister Mary, and Lazarus. When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he still remained in the same place two days. Then after that he said to his disciples: Let us go into Judea again. The disciples say to him: Rabbi, the Jews but now sought to stone thee, and goest thou thither again? Jesus answered: Are there not twelve hours of the day? If a man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world: but if he walk in the night, he stumbleth, because the light is not in him. These things he said: and after that he said to them: Lazarus our friend sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of his sleep. His disciples therefore said: Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. But Jesus spoke of his death; and they thought that he spoke of the repose of sleep. Then therefore Jesus said to them plainly: Lazarus is dead; and I am glad for your sakes, that I was not there, that you may believe: but let us go to him. Thomas therefore, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples: Let us also go, that we may die with him. Jesus therefore came, and found that he had been four days already in the grave. (Now Bethania was near Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off.) And many of the Jews were come to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Martha, therefore, as soon as she heard that Jesus was come, went to meet him; but Mary sat at home. Martha, therefore, said to Jesus: Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died; but now also I know, that whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith to her: Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith to him: I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said to her: I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, although he be dead, shall live: and

every one that liveth, and believeth in me, shall not die for ever. Believest thou this? She saith to him: Yea, Lord, I have believed that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, who art come into this world. And when she had said these things, she went, and called her sister Mary secretly, saying: The Master is come, and calleth for thee. She, as soon as she heard this, riseth quickly, and cometh to him; for Jesus was not yet come into the town; but he was still in that place where Martha had met him. The Jews therefore, who were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary that she rose up speedily, and went out, followed her saying: She goeth to the grave, to weep there. When Mary therefore was come where Jesus was, seeing him, she fell down at his feet, and saith to him: Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. Jesus therefore, when he saw her weeping, and the Jews that were come with her, weeping, he groaned in the spirit, ad troubled himself. And said: Where have you laid him? They say to him: Lord, come and see. And Jesus wept. The Jews therefore said: Behold, how he loved him. But some of them said: Could not he, that opened the eyes of the man born blind, have caused that this man should not die? Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the sepulchre; now it was a cave, and a stone was laid over it. Jesus saith: Take away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith to him: Lord, by this time he stinketh, for it is now the fourth day. Jesus saith to her: Did not I say to thee, that if thou believe, thou shalt see the glory of God? They took therefore the stone away. And Jesus lifting up his eyes, said: Father, I give thee thanks that thou hast heard me. And I know that thou hearest me always, but because of the people who stand about, have I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. When he had said these things, he cried with a loud voice: Lazarus, come forth. And presently he that had been dead, came forth, bound feet and hands with winding bands, and his face was bound about

with a napkin. Jesus said to them: Loose him and let him go. Many therefore of the Jews, who were come to Mary and Martha, and had seen the things that Jesus did, believed in him.

INSTRUCTION. By the marvellous raising up of Lazarus, Christ shows His divinity, and strengthens our belief in a future resurrection of the body, as St. Ambrose writes: "Why did Jesus go to the grave and with a loud voice cry out: Lazarus, come forth, if He did not wish to give testimony of the future resurrection?" The holy fathers also regard the raising of Lazarus as a type of the raising of the sinner from the sleep of sin, which takes place when he confesses his sins with contrition, and is loosened by the priests from their bonds. Beseech the Lord that with a loud voice He may cry to all sinners and to you: "Come forth, awake from the sleep of sin, confess your sins, and live forever!"

SATURDAY IN THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Isai.* xlix. 8—15.) Thus saith the Lord: In an acceptable time I have heard thee, and in the day of salvation I have helped thee: and I have preserved thee, and given thee to be a covenant of the people, that thou mightest raise up the earth, and possess the inheritances that were destroyed; that thou mightest say to them that are bound: Come forth: and to them that are in darkness: Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in every plain. They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor the sun strike them; for he that is merciful to them, shall be their shepherd, and at the fountains of waters he shall give them drink. And I will make all my mountains a way, and my paths shall be exalted. Behold, these shall come from afar, and behold, these from the north and from the sea, and these from the south country. Give praise, O ye heavens, and rejoice, O earth, ye mountains give praise with jubilation; because the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy on his poor ones. And Sion said: The Lord hath forsaken me, and the Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? And if she should forget, yet will I not forget thee, saith the Lord Almighty.

EXPLANATION. These words of the prophet are prophecies of Christ and His Church, and point to that happy condition ob-

tained for the whole world by the passion and death of Jesus and the foundation of His holy Church. All who enter the Church of Christ, are led by Christ, their hunger and thirst are appeased by the Sacraments, and the practice of difficult virtues which before was like the ascending of steep mountains, is made easy for them through Jesus. O what happiness is ours, that we are members of this holy Church, wherein Jesus acts so mercifully with us, and bestows so many graces upon us!

GOSPEL. (*John* viii. 12—20.) At that time: Jesus spoke to the multitude of the Jews, saying: I am the light of the world: he that followeth me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life. The Pharisees therefore said to him: Thou givest testimony of thyself: thy testimony is not true. Jesus answered, and said to them: Although I give testimony of myself, my testimony is true; for I know whence I came, and whither I go: but you know not whence I come, or whither I go. You judge according to the flesh: I judge not any man. And if I do judge, my judgment is true: because I am not alone; but I and the Father that sent me. And in your law it is written, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that give testimony of myself: and the Father that sent me, giveth testimony of me. They said therefore to him: Where is thy father? Jesus answered: Neither me do you know, nor my Father: if you did know me, perhaps you would know my Father also. These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, teaching in the temple: and no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

EXPLANATION. Christ calls Himself the light of the world, because by His teachings and example, He brings man to the knowledge of truth and virtue, if he will only listen to His voice, and is willing to follow His example, to eternal happiness. The Pharisees would have a proof of this, but Jesus pointed them to the testimony of His Father, that is, to the great miracles which He wrought in His Father's name. When Christ says: I judge no man, He means He judges not the Pharisees according to the flesh, that is, falsely and wrongly, or, as St. Chrysostom says: He now judged no man, because He had come into the world to redeem and save; the time of judgment was not now, but at the end of the world.

PETITION. O Jesus, Light of the world! Grant, that I may follow Thee always, acknowledge Thee always as the true Son of God, and one day receive a merciful judgment from Thee.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT. (JUDICA.)

His Sunday, called Judica from the first word of the Introit, is also called Passion Sunday, because from this day the Church occupies herself exclusively with the contemplation of the passion and death of Christ. The pictures of Christ crucified are covered to-day in memory of Christ having hidden Himself from the Jews until His entrance into Jerusalem, no longer showing Himself in public. (*John* xi. 54.) In the Mass the Glory be to the Father, &c., is omitted, because in the person of Christ the Holy Trinity was dishonored. The psalm Judica is not said to-day, because on this day the high priests held council about our Lord, for which reason the Church uses at the Introit, in the name of the suffering, these words: Judge me, O Lord, and distinguish my cause from the nation that is not holy: deliver me from the unjust and deceitful men. Send forth thy light and thy truth: for they have conducted me, and brought me to thy holy mount, and into thy tabernacles. (*Ps.* xlii.)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Mercifully look down upon thy people, we beseech Thee, O Almighty God, that, by thy bounty and protection, they may be governed and guarded both in body and soul. Through, &c.

EPISTLE. (*Hebr.* ix. 11—15.) Brethren: Christ being come an high priest of the good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation: neither by the blood of goats, or of calves, but by his own blood, entered once into the Holies, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and of oxen, and the ashes of an heifer being sprinkled, sanctify such as are defiled, to the cleansing of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ (who by the Holy Ghost offered himself unspotted unto God) cleanse our con-

science from dead works to serve the living God? And therefore he is the mediator of the new testament: that by means of his death, for the redemption of those transgressions which were under the former testament, they that are called, may receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

EXPLANATION. Paul here teaches, that Christ as the true high priest of the New Testament, through His precious blood on the altar of the cross has indeed perfectly made satisfaction for sins, but that the sinner must also do his own part, by cooperating with Christ to make himself less unworthy of participation in the passion of Christ and His merits, and to appropriate to himself its fruits. This is done, when he diligently and devoutly assists at the unbloody Sacrifice of Mass, by which the fruits of the death on the cross are attributed to us; and when according to the will of the Church, he purifies his conscience by true contrition and confession, and when he seeks by trust in Christ's merits to render some satisfaction for his sins through voluntary penance and faithful following of Christ.

ASPIRATION. Grant us, O meekest Jesus, Thy grace, that we through perfect contrition for our sins and the exercise of good works, may make ourselves participators in the merits of Thy bitter passion.

GOSPEL. (*John* viii. 46—59.) At that time: Jesus said to the multitude of the Jews: Which of you shall convince me of sin? If I say the truth to you, why do you not believe me? He that is of God, heareth the words of God. Therefore you hear them not, because you are not of God. The Jews therefore answered, and said to him: Do not we say well that thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil? Jesus answered: I have not a devil: but I honor my Father, and you have dishonored me. But I seek not my own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth. Amen, amen, I say to you: If any man keep my word, he shall not see death for ever. The Jews therefore said: Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets: and thou sayest: If any man keep my word, he shall not taste death for ever. Art thou greater than our Father Abraham, who is dead? and the prophets are dead. Whom dost thou make thyself? Jesus answered: If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It

is my Father that glorifieth me, of whom you say that he is your God. And you have not known him, but I know him. And if I should say that I know him not, I should be like to you, a liar. But I do know him, and do keep his word. Abraham your father rejoiced that he might see my day: he saw it, and was glad. The Jews then said to him: Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said to them: Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham was made, I am. They took up stones therefore to cast at him. But Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple.

Why did Christ ask the Jews, which of them should convince Him of sin?

To show us that he who would teach and punish others, should himself, as much as is in him, be without blame; and to manifest that He, being without sin, must necessarily be more than man, therefore the Saviour, the Son of God, as He so often and especially in this gospel announced, and proved Himself by His miracles.

Why did He say: He that is of God, heareth the words of God?

To show that the Jews, who would not believe His divine teachings, because the devil kept their hearts blinded by envy and hatred, could not therefore be the children of God, but of the devil. "Therefore," says St. Gregory, "let every one when he hears the words of God, ask himself, whence he comes. Eternal truth demands, that we are desirous of the heavenly fatherland, that we tame the desires of the flesh, are indifferent to the world's praises, covet not our neighbor's goods, and give alms according to our means. Therefore, let every one examine himself, and when in his heart he attends to this voice of God, he will know, if he is of God."

CONSOLATION IN CALUMNIATION.

When Christ told the Jews the truth, He received, as is the custom in this world, no other reward than insults and calumnies, for they called Him a Samaritan, that is, an unbeliever, a heretic, one possessed by the devil. This was a hard slander for Christ, and it must have greatly pained Him; this is a great consolation to those who are innocently calumniated, for they can consider, that Christ Himself received nothing better. St. Augustine consoles such by saying: "O friend, what is there can happen to you that your Saviour did not suffer before you? Is it slander? He heard it, when He was called a glutton, a drunkard, a heretic, and a rebel, a companion of sinners, one possessed by the devil, even to hear, when driving out devils, that He did so by Beelzebub, prince of devils. (*Matt.* ix. 34.) He therefore comforts His apostles, saying, If they have called the good man of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household?" (*Matt.* x. 25.) Are the pains bitter? There is no pain so bitter, that He has not endured it; for what is more painful, and at the same time more ignominious than the death of the cross? For think, says St. Paul, diligently upon him who endureth such opposition from sinners against himself; that you be not wearied (by all contempt and calumny), fainting in your minds. (*Hebr.* xii. 3.)

How and why did Christ defend Himself against the slanders of the Jews?

Only by denying with the greatest modesty the things with which they reproached Him, saying, that He had not a devil, that He was not a Samaritan, because He honored His Father not in their manner, but in His own. Christ repelled this calumny, while He left the rest unanswered, because to permit this to rest upon Him, would be to have suffered His divine mission to be doubted, and, consequently, the honor of God and the salvation of man would have been injured. Christ thus teaches us by His own conduct to defend ourselves only against those detractions and insults which endanger the honor of God and the salvation of man, and then to defend ourselves with all modesty; by no means to do it, however, if they injure only our own good name, for we should leave the restoration of that to God, as exemplified by Christ, who knows better than we how to preserve and restore it.

[See the Instruction on the Epistle of the third Sunday after Epiphany.]

How had Abraham seen Christ's day?

In spirit, that is, he had by divine revelation while yet in life, known the coming of Christ, and had rejoiced in advance; also, he heard, by revelation from God, with the other just in limbo, that Christ's coming had taken place, and drew the greatest comfort from it.

Why did Christ conceal Himself from the Jews, instead of taking vengeance on them?

Because the time for His death had not come; because He would show His meekness and patience, and teach us, that we should go out of our enemies' way rather than resist them or take vengeance upon them; Christ wished to instruct us to avoid passionate and quarrelsome people, for it is an honor for a man to separate from quarrels, but all fools are meddling with reproaches. (*Prov.* xx. 3.)

PETITION. When Thine enemies calumniated Thee, most meek Jesus, Thou didst answer them with tender words, and when they were about to stone Thee, Thou didst depart from them, while we can scarcely bear a hard word, and then will not yield to our neighbor, but defend ourselves most passionately and avenge ourselves. Ah! pardon us for our impatience, and grant us the grace patiently to bear the wrongs done us, answering, when necessary, with gentleness, for Thy glory and the salvation of our neighbor.

MONDAY IN THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Jonas* iii. 1—10.) In those days: The word of the Lord came to Jonas the second time, saying: Arise and go to Ninive the great city: and preach in it the preaching that I bid thee. And Jonas arose, and went to Ninive according to the word of the Lord: now Ninive was a great city of three days journey. And Jonas began to enter into the city one day's journey: and he cried and said: Yet forty days and Ninive shall be destroyed. And the men of Ninive believed in God: and they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least. And the word came to the King of Ninive: and he rose up out of his throne, and cast away his robe from him, and was clothed with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published in Ninive from the mouth of the king and of his princes, saying: Let neither men nor beasts, oxen nor sheep, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water. And let men and beasts be covered with sackcloth, and cry to the Lord with all their strength, and let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the iniquity that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn, and forgive: and will turn away from his fierce anger, and we shall not perish? And God saw their works, that they were turned from their evil way: and the Lord our God had mercy on the people.

INSTRUCTION. In this lesson is plainly shown the great effects produced by true penance; it took away so many and such great vices from a great city, subdued the wrath of God, turned aside His scourge, yes, even gained grace and reconciliation, so that the Ninivites from slaves of the devil were made friends of God, from an unjust, godless, infidel, vicious people were changed to a just, pious, faithful, holy nation. "If," says St. Bernard, "we turn to penance, we make the angels exult. Hasten, therefore, brethren, hasten; not the angels only, but the Creator of the angels even awaits you." God awaits you also, and the angels; hasten to penance, that the Ninivites may not some day bear witness against you. (*Matt.* xii. 41.)

GOSPEL. (*John* vii. 32—39.) At that time: The rulers and Pharisees sent ministers to apprehend Jesus. Jesus therefore said to them: Yet a little while I am with you: and then I go to him that sent me. You shall seek me, and

shall not find me: and where I am, thither you cannot come. The Jews, therefore, said among themselves: Whither will he go, that we shall not find him: will he go to the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles? What is this saying that he hath said: You shall seek me, and shall not find me; and where I am, you cannot come? And on the last and great day of the festival, Jesus stood and cried, saying: If any man thirst, let him come to me, and drink. He that believeth in me, as the scripture saith, "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Now this he said of the Spirit which they should receive who believed in him.

EXPLANATION. Jesus, in this gospel, tells the Jews, that He will soon return to the Father, meaning that He should die, rise from death, and ascend into heaven; then will they seek Him, that is, desire the Messiah, but not find Him, because they would not recognize Him, the true Messiah, but cast Him away, and they would not come there, whither He was going, into heaven, because they remained in their sins. O how terrible is the blindness of man, who knows not the time of grace and visitation, who despises the hand God stretches out towards him, and gives no heed to the call to penance! Hear what God Himself says: Because I called and you refused; I stretched out my hand, and there was none that regarded,—I also will laugh in your destruction, when sudden calamity shall fall on you, when tribulation and distress (of death and judgment) shall come upon you; then shall they call upon me, and I will not hear; they shall rise in the morning (to seek me), and shall not find me. (*Prov.* i. 24—28.)

TUESDAY IN THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Dan.* xiv. 28—42.) In those days: The people of Babylon gathered together against the king, and said to him: Deliver up to us Daniel, who hath destroyed Bel, and killed the Dragon, otherwise we will destroy thee and thy house. And the king saw that they pressed upon him violently: and being constrained by necessity, he delivered Daniel to them. And they cast him into the den of lions, and he was there six days. And in the den there were seven lions, and they had given to them two carcasses every day, and two sheep: but then they were not given unto them, to the intent that they might devour Daniel. Now there was in

Judea a prophet called Habacuc, and he had boiled pottage, and had broken bread in a bowl; and was going into the field to carry it to the reapers. And the angel of the Lord said to Habacuc: Carry the dinner which thou hast, into Babylon to Daniel, who is in the lions' den. And Habacuc said: Lord, I never saw Babylon, nor do I know the den. And the angel of the Lord took him by the top of his head, and carried him by the hair of his head, and set him in Babylon over the den in the force of his spirit. And Habacuc cried, saying: O Daniel, thou servant of God, take the dinner that God hath sent thee. And Daniel said: Thou hast remembered me, O God, and thou hast not forsaken them that love thee. And Daniel arose and ate. And the angel of the Lord presently set Habacuc again in his own place. And upon the seventh day the king came to bewail Daniel: and he came to the den, and looked in, and behold, Daniel was sitting in the midst of the lions. And the king cried out with a loud voice, saying: Great art thou, O Lord, the God of Daniel. And he drew him out of the lions' den. But those that had been the cause of his destruction, he cast into the den, and they were devoured in a moment before him. Then the King said: Let all the inhabitants of the whole earth fear the God of Daniel; for he is the Saviour, working signs and wonders in the earth; who hath delivered Daniel out of the lions' den.

EXPLANATION. The Babylonians worshipped the detestable idol Bel, whose priests deceived the people. Daniel unmasked the deceits of the priests, destroyed the idol and its temple, at which the Babylonians became furious, and forced the king, who was well disposed towards Daniel, but who had a coward's heart, to cause him to be thrown into the lions' den. But God does not desert His faithful servants. Daniel remained in the midst of the lions unharmed, and was fed in a marvellous manner by God. Only faithfully fulfil your duties, my Christian, always promote the honor of God, and destroy the works of Satan. Fear nothing, God never deserts His own.

GOSPEL. (*John* vii. 1—13.) At that time: Jesus walked in Galilee; for he would not walk in Judea: because the Jews sought to kill him. Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. And his brethren said to him: Depart from hence, and go into Judea; that thy disciples also may see thy works which thou dost. For there is no man that doth

any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, manifest thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him. Then Jesus said to them: My time is not yet come; but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth: because I give testimony of it, that the works thereof are evil. Go you up to this festival day, but I go not up to this festival day: because my time is not accomplished. When he had said these things, he himself stayed in Galilee. But after his brethren were gone up, then he also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. The Jews therefore sought him on the festival day, and said: Where is he? And there was much murmuring among the multitude concerning him. For some said: He is a good man. And others said: No, but he seduceth the people. Yet no man spoke openly of him, for fear of the Jews.

EXPLANATION. Even the brothers, that is, the relatives of Christ did not believe in Him, and desired, therefore, that He should go to Jerusalem, and perform miracles there, that from the high council there judgment might be given, whether He was the true Messiah. But Jesus answered them: My time, to die and by my death and resurrection to convince the whole world of my mission, is not yet come; but your time is always ready, that is, you take part with my enemies, because you are children of the world, they also love the world, and so hate me, because I reprove and punish the sinful works of the world; but you they hate not, you have nothing to fear from them, you, as they, love the world. The truth of Christ's words is verified even to-day. He who takes sides with the reckless children of the world, has nothing to fear from them, but he who avoids their society, is persecuted and slandered. Blessed shall you be, says Jesus, when men shall hate you, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake. Be glad in that day, and rejoice, for behold, your reward is great in heaven. (*Luke* vi. 22. 23.)

WEDNESDAY IN THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Lev.* xix. 1., 2., 11—19.) In those days: The Lord spake to Moses, saying: Speak to all the assembly of the children of Israel, and thou shalt say to them: I am the Lord your God. You shall not steal. You shall not lie:

neither shall any man deceive his neighbor. Thou shalt not swear falsely by my name, nor profane the name of thy God. I am the Lord. Thou shalt not calumniate thy neighbor, nor oppress him by violence. The wages of him that has been hired by thee, shall not abide with thee until the morning. Thou shalt not speak evil of the deaf, not put a stumbling block before the blind: but thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, because I am the Lord. Thou shalt not do that which is unjust, nor judge unjustly. Respect not the person of the poor, nor honor the countenance of the mighty. But judge thy neighbor according to justice. Thou shalt not be a detractor nor a whisperer among the people. Thou shalt not stand against the blood of thy neighbor. I am the Lord. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, but reprove him openly, lest thou incur sin through him. Seek not revenge, nor be mindful of the injury of thy citizens. Thou shalt love thy friend as thyself. I am the Lord. Keep ye my laws, for I am the Lord your God.

EXPLANATION. There have been and are people who assert, that God's commandments cannot be kept. The Council of Trent answers to this (*Sess.* vi. *c.* 11.): "God commands nothing that is impossible, but He exhorts you, through the command, to perform what you can, and to ask for what you cannot perform, and He assists you so, that you can keep all. His commands are not difficult, whose yoke is sweet, and whose burden is light."

PRAYER. O Jesus! whose will it is, that, if I wish rest for my soul, I shall take up Thy yoke, grant me the grace to bear it joyously after Thee to my life's end. Amen.

GOSPEL. (*John* x. 22—28.) At that time: It was the feast of the dedication at Jerusalem: and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch, the Jews therefore came round about him, and said to him: How long dost thou hold our souls in suspense? if thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them: I speak to you, and you believe not: the works that I do in the name of my Father, they give testimony of me: but you do not believe, because you are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice: and I know them, and they follow me: and I give them eternal life; and they shall not perish for ever, and no man

shall pluck them out of my hand. That which my Father hath given me, is greater than all: and no man can snatch them out of the hand of my Father. I and the Father are one. The Jews then took up stones to stone him. Jesus answered them: Many good works I have shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do you stone me? The Jews answered him: For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy: and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them: Is it not written in your law: I said, you are Gods? If he called them gods, to whom the word of God was spoken, and the scripture cannot be broken; do you say of him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world: Thou blasphemest: because I said: I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do: though you will not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.

EXPLANATION. By subterfuge, in order that they might catch Jesus in His speech, the Jews repeatedly asked if He were the Christ. Jesus points to His works and tells them, that they should therefore believe in Him, but they could not believe in Him, because they did not wish to belong to His flock, and to accept His doctrine, which to them seemed too hard. There are many Christians who have indeed the name and are counted among Christ's sheep, who are not His sheep, because they follow not His doctrine. Only those are His sheep who hear His voice, and faithfully follow Him, to these He gives eternal life, and they will not perish, nor will any one, neither the world, the flesh, nor the devil, take them from His hand. Listen, therefore, to the voice of Jesus, follow Him as a faithful lamb, and He will never abandon you, neither in time nor eternity.

THURSDAY IN THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Dan.* iii. 34—45.) In those days: Azarias prayed to the Lord, saying: Deliver us not up for ever, we beseech thee, for thy name's sake, and abolish not thy covenant: and take not away thy mercy from us, for the sake of Abraham thy beloved, and Isaac thy servant, and Israel thy holy one: to whom thou hast spoken, promising that thou wouldst multiply their seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand

that is on the sea shore. For we, O Lord, are diminished more than any nation, and are brought low in all the earth this day for our sins. Neither is there at this time prince, or leader, or prophet, or holocaust, or sacrifice, or oblation, or incense, or place of first-fruits before thee. That we may find thy mercy: nevertheless in a contrite heart and humble spirit let us be accepted. As in holocausts of rams, and bullocks, and as in thousands of fat lambs: so let our sacrifice be made in thy sight this day: that it may please thee: for there is no confusion to them that trust in thee. And now we follow thee with all our heart, and we fear thee, and seek thy face. Put us not to confusion, but deal with us according to thy meekness, and according to the multitude of thy mercies. And deliver us according to thy wonderful works, and give glory to thy name, O Lord: and let all them be confounded that shew evils to thy servants, let them be confounded in all thy might, and let their strength be broken: and let them know that thou art the Lord, the only God, and glorious over all the world. O Lord our God.

EXPLANATION. In his unbounded arrogance King Nabuchodonosor had caused a statue of himself to be erected, and commanded all his subjects, as well as the Jews who were his captives, to adore it. Three Jewish youths resisted, and by order of the king were cast into a fiery furnace. But wonderfully preserved by God, they walked about in the midst of the flames, praising the Lord, and one of them, by name Azarias, prayed Him to have mercy on His nation, and save it from the hands of its enemies, because it acknowledged its sins, and was contrite of heart. Let us imitate these three youths, let us not bend the knee before the idol of the hour, the lust of the world, and of vanity, let us sacrifice all for the faith, even our last drop of blood.

[See the gospel and its explanation on the feast of St. Mary Magdalen in the second part of this book.]

FRIDAY IN THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Jer.* xvii. 13—18.) In those days: Jeremias said: O Lord, the hope of Israel: all that forsake thee, shall be confounded: they that depart from thee, shall be written in the earth: because they have forsaken the Lord, the vein of living waters. Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed: save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise. Behold, they say to me: Where is the word of the Lord? let it come.

And I am not troubled, following thee for my pastor, and I have not desired the day of man, thou knowest it. That which went out of my lips, hath been right in thy sight. Be not thou a terror unto me, thou art my hope in the day of affliction. Let them be confounded that persecute me, and let not me be confounded: let them be afraid, and let me not be afraid: bring upon them the day of affliction, and with a double destruction, destroy them, O Lord our God.

EXPLANATION. The Prophet Jeremias was insulted and persecuted by the Jews, because he fearlessly announced the truth to them; he now confidently laments his troubles before God, and comforts himself with this, that his glory is in God, that is, that the aim of his strivings was the glory of God, and that if he had effected any good, the honor belonged to God. Guard against seeking vain glory. "Be careful," writes St. Jerome, "to avoid being carried away by the desire of vain glory. Behold what an evil it is, because he who seeks such glory, cannot believe! Let us always say, Thou, O Lord, art my glory!" (*Epist. ad Eustoch.* 22.)

GOSPEL. (*John* xi. 47—54.) At that time: The chief priests and Pharisees assembled in council against Jesus, and said: What do we, for this man doth many miracles? If we let him alone so, all men will believe in him; and the Romans will come, and take away our place and nation. But one of them named Caiphas, being the high-priest that year, said to them: You know nothing, neither do you consider that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this he spoke not of himself: but being the high-priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation; and not only for the nation, but to gather in one the children of God, that were dispersed. From that day therefore they devised to put him to death. Wherefore Jesus walked no more openly among the Jews, but he went unto a country near the desert, unto a city that is called Ephrem, and there he abode with his disciples.

EXPLANATION. With each day the Jews' hatred increased, the more wonderful deeds our Saviour performed, the more He was at all cost to be put out of the way. They held a council, therefore, at which the high priest Caiphas prophesied the death of Jesus for the salvation of the whole world, in these remarkable

words: It is expedient for you, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. Caiphas was a wicked man, yet, because he was high priest, he prophesied. Thus the Holy Ghost operates by means of the holy Sacraments, through good and bad priests, using them as His instruments to effect the good, as a tube is used to conduct water.

SATURDAY IN THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT.

LESSON. (*Jer.* xviii. 18—23.) In those days: the wicked Jews said to one another: Come, and let us invent devices against Jeremias: for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet; come, and let us strike him with the tongue, and let us give no heed to all his words. Give heed to me, O Lord, and hear the voice of my adversaries. Shall evil be rendered for good, because they have digged a pit for my soul? Remember that I have stood in thy sight, to speak good for them, and to turn away thy indignation from them. Therefore deliver up their children to famine, and bring them into the hands of the sword; let their wives be bereaved of children, and widows; and let the husbands be slain by death: let their young men be stabbed with the sword in battle. Let a cry be heard out of their houses: for thou shalt bring the robber upon them suddenly: because they have digged a pit to take me, and have hid snares for my feet. But thou, O Lord, knowest all their counsel against me unto death: forgive not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from thy sight: let them be overthrown before thy eyes, in the time of thy wrath do thou destroy them, O Lord our God.

EXPLANATION. As the Church regards the Prophet Jeremias as a prototype of our Saviour, she makes use on this day of this lesson in which the prophet, whom his enemies sought to put to death, that they might no longer hear his reproaches, while their false prophets would have free play, turns for help to God, and prays Him to send misfortunes and sufferings to the Jews, that they might reform. Dare not ever to wish evil to your enemies, except with this motive, that they may see their injustice and be converted to God.

GOSPEL. (*John* xii. 10—36.) At that time: The chief priests thought to kill Lazarus also; because many of the Jews by reason of him went away, and believed in Jesus.

And on the next day a great multitude, that was come to the festival day, when they had heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him and cried: Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel. And Jesus found a young ass, and sat upon it, as it is written: "Fear not, daughter of Sion, behold, thy King cometh sitting on an ass's colt." These things his disciples did not know at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, they then remembered that these things were written of him; and that they had done these things to him. The multitude therefore gave testimony, which was with him, when he called Lazarus out of the grave, and raised him from the dead. For which reason also the people came to meet him: because they heard he had done this miracle. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves: Do you see that we prevail nothing? behold, the whole world is gone after him. Now there were certain Gentiles among them that came up to adore on the festival day. These therefore came to Philip, who was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying: Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh, and telleth Andrew. Again Andrew and Philip told Jesus. But Jesus answered them, saying: The hour is come that the Son of Man shall be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground, die; itself remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life, shall lose it: and he that hateth his life in this world, keepeth it unto life eternal. If any man minister to me, let him follow me: and where I am, there also shall my minister be. If any man minister to me, him will my Father honor. Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause I came unto this hour. Father glorify thy name. A voice therefore came from heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." The multitude therefore that stood and heard, said that it thundered. Others said: An angel spoke to him. Jesus answered, and said:

This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of the world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself. (Now this he said signifying what death he should die.) The multitude answered him: We have heard out of the law, that Christ abideth forever; and how sayest thou: The Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man? Jesus therefore said to them: Yet a little while, the light is among you. Walk whilst you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not: and he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whether he goeth. Whilst you have the light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light. These things Jesus spoke, and he went away and hid himself from them.

EXPLANATION. The raising of Lazarus from the death brought many to believe in Jesus, and even gentiles came to see Him and hear His teachings. This increased the hatred of the Pharisees to the highest degree, and not alone Jesus but Lazarus was to be put to death, they hoping thereby to extinguish every recollection of his having been restored by Jesus. The hour had however come when Jesus, according to the eternal decrees of God, was to give Himself up voluntarily to death, and willed to be like a grain of wheat buried in the earth, that through the fruits of His death, by His merits, the sinner might receive life. By the words: He that loveth his life, shall lose it, Jesus left it to be understood, that he who gives way to the evil inclinations of his heart, will perish. But he who overcomes and governs them, will be saved, and he is His true servant who follows Him. In reply to the prayer Jesus made, that His Father should glorify Him, there came a voice from heaven, the signification of which the sensual Jews knew not, for God's voice is understood only by him, who humbly and willingly receives it. By the words: And I, if I be lifted up from the earth (on the cross), will draw all things to myself, Jesus teaches us, that by His merits, His example, and the power of His love, He would draw our soul's love to Himself. O let yourself be drawn to Him by the grace which He so often offers you, and by the love which He shows you on the cross. Say often to Jesus with St. Augustine: "Lord, take me from myself, and give me to Thyself," make me one with Thee and Thy love, and permit me not to be separated from Thee, and fall into darkness, whence there is no deliverance.

INSTRUCTION FOR PALM-SUNDAY.

Why is this day called Palm-Sunday?

ON account of the palms with which the people strewed the Saviour's path before Him, as He entered Jerusalem; and because palms are on this day blessed before service, by the Church, which are afterwards carried in solemn procession in commemoration of Christ's solemn entrance into Jerusalem.

Why are palms blessed?

That those who bear them with devotion, may receive protection for soul and body, as prayed for in the blessing; that the

inhabitants of the place in which they are kept, may be preserved from all evils; that those who carry the palms, may, by means of the Church's prayers, adorn their souls with good works and thus, in spirit, meet the Saviour; that, through Christ whose members we are, we may conquer the kingdom of death and darkness, and be made worthy to share in His glorious resurrection and triumphant entrance into heaven. St. Augustine writes of the palms: "They are emblems of praise, and the signs of victory; because the Lord by death conquered death, and with the sign of victory, the cross, overcame the devil, the prince of death." Therefore we go singing hymns of praise, with the cross in advance, in procession around the Church; when we come to the Church door, we find it locked, and the priest knocks at it with the cross, to show, how by Adam's sin heaven was closed to us, and that only since Jesus has killed death, and only by the cross of reconciliation, are the Church doors and the gates of paradise open to men, who love the Lord.

To infuse us with compassion for the suffering Redeemer, the Church, in the person of Christ, cries at the Introit in lamenting tones: Lord, keep not thy help far from me; look to my defence; save me from the lion's mouth, and rescue me in my distress, from the horns of unicorns. O God, my God, look upon me: why hast thou forsaken me? They are my sins (that is, the sins of all men which I have taken upon me), that keep salvation far from me. (*Ps.* xxi.)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O almighty and eternal God, who wouldst have our Saviour become man, and suffer on a cross, to give mankind an example of humility: mercifully grant, that we may improve by the example of His patience, and partake of His resurrection. Through, &c.

EPISTLE. (*Phil.* ii. 5—11.) Brethren: Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery, to be equal with God: but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and in habit found as a man. He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death; even to the death of the cross. For which cause God also hath exalted him, and hath given him a name which is above all names: that in the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of the Father.

INSTRUCTION. In this epistle, the apostle, as St. Chrysostom says, in a special manner urges us to humility by which we

are made like to Christ, the Lord, who putting off the majesty of His divinity, became man, and obediently humbled Himself to the ignominious death of the cross. "Would that all might hear," exclaims St. Gregory, "that God resists the proud, and gives His grace to the humble! Would that all might hear: Thou dust and ashes, why dost thou exalt thyself? Would that all might hear the words of the Lord: Learn of me, because I am humble of heart. Because for this the only begotten Son of God assumed the form of our weakness, suffered mockery, insults, and torments, for this that the humble God might teach man not to be proud."

ASPIRATION. Ah, that my sentiments were as Thine, O my Lord Jesus! who so humbledst Thyself and wast obedient to the most ignominious death of the cross. Grant me, I beseech Thee, O my Redeemer, the grace to diligently follow Thee in humility.

In Mass instead of the gospel the Passion, as it is called, that is, the History of the Passion of our Lord, is read from Matthew chapters xxvi., xxvii., and xxviii.*) And neither incense, nor lights are used, nor is the Dominus vobiscum said, thus signifying that Jesus, the Light of the world, was taken away by death, at which, as we know, the faith and devotion of the apostles shook and became almost extinct. When reading the History of the Passion, the priest, when he comes to the words: and bowing his head, he gave up the ghost, with all the congregation, falls on his knees to consider the great mystery of the death of Jesus, by which our redemption was effected, and to give God thanks for it from his inmost heart.

At the blessing of the palms, the priest reads the following

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxi. 1—9.) At that time: Jesus drawing near to Jerusalem; and being come to Bethphage, at Mount Olivet, he sent two of his disciples, and said to them: Go ye into the village that is over against you, and immediately you shall find an ass tied and a colt with her: loose them and bring them to me: and if any man shall say any thing to you, say ye, that the Lord hath need of them: and forthwith he will let them go. Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "Tell ye the daughter of Sion: Behold, thy king cometh to thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass and a colt the foal of her that is used to the yoke." And the disciples going, did

*) This Passion will be found in the Instruction for Good Friday.

as Jesus commanded them. And they brought the ass and the colt: and laid their garments upon them, and made him sit thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way: and others cut down boughs from the trees, and strewed them in the way: and the multitudes that went before and that followed, cried, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Why did Jesus enter Jerusalem so solemnly and yet so humble?

To show that He was the promised Messiah and King of the Jews, as foretold by the Prophet Zacharias (ix. 9.), and that He

had come to conquer the world, the flesh, and the devil, for which He used the weapons of meekness, humility, and poverty, and therefore came seated not on a proud steed, but on an ass's weak colt, like a poor person, entering Jerusalem in all humility, thus teaching us that meekness and indifference to earthly goods, are our best weapons for victory over our enemies; to fill the type of the paschal lamb, for on this day the lambs who were to be sacrificed in the temple on the following Friday, were solemnly led into the city. Thus Jesus, like a meek lamb, entered the city of Jerusalem to be sacrificed for us.

Why did the people meet Christ with palm-branches?

This happened by the inspiration of God, to indicate that Christ, the conqueror of death, hell, and the devil, would reconcile man with God, and open the heavenly Jerusalem to him, for the palm is the emblem of victory and peace. By this we learn also the inconsistency and mutability of the world; for the very people who on this day met Christ with palm-branches shouting: "Hosanna to the Son of David," a few days after shouted: "Crucify him! Crucify him!"—Learn from this to despise the world's praise, and not to imitate the inconsistency of this people by receiving at Easter your Saviour with joy in holy Communion, and soon crucify Him anew by sin. (*Hebr.* vi. 6.)

How should we take part to-day in the procession of blessed palms?

With the pious intention of meeting Christ in spirit, with the devout people of Jerusalem, adoring Him, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David, Hosanna to Him who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna to the Highest!" and with the heartfelt prayer to Jesus for His grace, that by it we may become blooming, and with Him conquer the world, the flesh, and the devil, and thus merit to be received into the heavenly Jerusalem.

PETITION. O Jesus, Thou always fresh and fruitful Tree of Life! grant, that we may by love be like palms ever green, and by the practice of good works blossom and bring forth fruit.

INSTRUCTION FOR HOLY WEEK.

Why is this week called Holy Week?

This week is called Holy Week and also the Great Week, because during it Christ consummated the most holy mystery of our redemption, and gave us such unspeakable benefits. It is besides called the Quiet Week, because of the quietness of the Church services.

What remarkable things did Christ do during the first four days of this week?

After He had entered the temple at Jerusalem on Palm-Sunday amidst the greatest rejoicings of the people, and was even saluted by the children with the joyous clamor of "Hosanna", He drove the buyers and sellers out of the temple, and when He had spent the entire day in preaching and healing the sick, He went in the evening to Bethania, where He remained over night in Lazarus' house, because in Jerusalem no one wished to receive Him for fear of His enemies. The three following days He spent in Jerusalem, teaching in the temple, and passing the night in prayer on Mount Olivet. In His sermons during these days, He especially strove to convince the Jewish priests, the lawyers and Pharisees, that He was really the Messiah, and that they would commit a terrible sin, bringing themselves and the whole Jewish nation to destruction by His death, which He foretold. This ruin of the people He illustrated to them most plainly by the withering of the fig-tree under His curse, and foretelling the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem. He disputed with them, and confounded them, openly and by parables, that out of anger and hatred, they with one mind decreed to kill Him. To the execution of their design the impious Judas aided the most, for from avarice he betrayed Him for thirty pieces of silver (about fifteen dollars in our money) to the chief priests, and the next day, Thursday, became His betrayer and delivered Him over into their hands.

MONDAY AFTER PALM-SUNDAY.

LESSON. (*Isai.* l. 5—10.) In those days: Isaias said: The Lord God hath opened my ear, and I do not resist: I have not gone back. I have given my body to the strikers, and my cheeks to them that plucked them: I have not turned away my face from them that rebuked me, and spit upon me. The Lord God is my helper, therefore am I not confounded. He is near that justifieth me, who will contend with me? let us stand together. Who is my adversary? let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord God is my helper: who is he that shall condemn me? Lo, they shall all be destroyed as a garment, the moth shall eat them up. Who is there among you that feareth the Lord, that heareth the voice of his servant, that hath walked in darkness, and hath no light? let him hope in the name of the Lord, and lean upon his God.

EXPLANATION. All the holy fathers agree, that Isaias here prophesies of Christ, who in accordance with His Father's will,

gave Himself up without turning back, to the most ignominious sufferings for us, and strengthened by divine assistance like a rock patiently permitted all the blows, torments, and ignominies of His enemies to come upon Him. But they did not escape just punishment, for their guilty consciences devoured them interiorly, as a moth consumes a garment, and the memory of them disappeared from the earth. Let us put our trust in God, if, with Christ, we are surrounded as by darkness with suffering and distress, finding no help, for He will be our Redeemer and our Helper.

GOSPEL. (*John* xii. 1—9.) Now Jesus, six days before the pasch, came to Bethania, where Lazarus had been dead, whom Jesus raised to life. And they made him a supper there; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of them that were at table with him. Mary therefore took a pound of ointment of right spikenard, of great price, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. Then one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, he that was about to betray him, said: Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? Now he said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and having the purse carried the things that were put therein.

Jesus therefore said: Let her alone, that she may keep it against the day of my burial, for the poor you have always with you; but me you have not always. A great multitude therefore of the Jews knew that he was there; and they came not for Jesus's sake only, but that they might see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead.

INSTRUCTION. Like St. Magdalen we also should anoint the Saviour by diligently performing good works, and thus become, as the holy Apostle says, a good odour unto Christ. (ii. *Cor.* ii. 15.) The conduct of the traitor Judas should serve us as a warning not to be carried away by attachment to temporal riches, to avarice, and by it to greater crimes. Judas did not become all at once such a great sinner, he loved money and so grew cold to the love of God; seduced by this love of money, he became a miser, a traitor to his master and a suicide. Strive, therefore, to suppress your evil inclinations at the moment of their commencement, that they may not bring you into sin, and render you miserable like Judas.

TUESDAY AFTER PALM-SUNDAY.

LESSON. (*Jer.* xi. 18—20.) In those days: Jeremias said: Thou, O Lord, hast shewed me, and I have known: then thou shewedst me their doings. And I was as a meek lamb, that is carried to be a victim: and I knew not that they had devised counsels against me, saying: Let us put wood on his bread, and cut him off from the land of the living, and let his name be remembered no more. But thou, O Lord of Sabaoth, who judgest justly, and triest the reins and the heart, let me see thy revenge on them: for to thee I have revealed my cause.

EXPLANATION. The universal teaching of the Church is, that these words said in the person of Jeremias, are to be understood of Christ. These words apply first to Jeremias who, like Christ, was unjustly persecuted, but who showed only meekness to his persecutors; in their proper sense, they refer to Christ who let Himself silently, like a meek lamb, be nailed by His enemies to the bitter wood of the cross. Learn here, my Christian, to follow the example of the meek Lamb of God, and silently bear all evils. St. Augustine remarks in reference to the prophet's prayer for vengeance on his enemies: "Well wishing, not vengeance it is, when the just rejoices, that punishment comes to the impious, for he has no pleasure in the sinner's destruction, whose conversion he wishes, but he desires justice by which many are converted.

[On this day also the Passion, or History of the Passion according to St. Mark xiv., xv., *is said in place of the gospel. See God Friday.]*

WEDNESDAY AFTER PALM-SUNDAY.

LESSON. (*Isai.* lxii. 11., *and* lxiii. 1—7.) Thus said the Lord God: Tell the daughter of Sion: Behold, thy Saviour cometh. Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bosra, this beautiful one in his robe, walking in the greatness of his strength? I, that speak justice, and am a defender to save. Why then is thy apparel red, and thy garments like them that tread in the wine press? I have trodden the wine press alone, and of the Gentiles there is not a man with me: I have trampled on them in my indignation, and have trodden them down in my wrath, and their blood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have stained all my apparel. For the day of vengeance is in my heart,

the year of my redemption is come. I looked about and there was none to help: I sought, and there was none to give aid: and my own arm hath saved me, and my indignation itself hath helped me. And I have trodden down the people in my wrath, and made them drunk in my indignation, and have brought down their strength to the earth. I will remember the tender mercies of the Lord, the praise of the Lord for all the things that the Lord hath bestowed on us.

EXPLANATION. Once more the prophet's words point to the Saviour, and describe His triumphal entrance into Jerusalem, where He went to accomplish the work of redemption, which He had always in His heart and before His eyes, and His victories over all His enemies, the world, and the devil, whom He had trampled on and destroyed as the winepresser the grapes. On the day of Christ's death, came also the day of vengeance upon His enemies whom He overcame alone on the cross. In the last words the prophet, who foresaw all this, thanks God for the redemption through Christ, and we also, are called upon to thank the Saviour for His blood shed for us.

[Here is read the Passion according to Luke xxii., *and* xxiii. 1—53. *See God Friday.]*

INSTRUCTION FOR HOLY THURSDAY.

What festival does the Church celebrate to-day?

TO-day the holy Catholic Church commemorates, from their commencement, the solemn circumstances under which the divine Saviour instituted the Holy Sacrifice of Mass, and the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

What did Christ do that was remarkable on this day?

He kept with His apostles the last Easter, that is, He ate with them, according to the law of Moses, a roasted lamb, which was a prototype of Himself, and was eaten with bitter herbs and unleavened bread, standing with clothes girded up, and staff in hand, in remembrance of the hurried escape from Egypt when the Jews had thus to eat it (*Exod.* xii.); and in admonition that we Christians should receive and eat the true Easter Lamb, Christ Jesus, in the Most Blessed Sacrament with fervent devotion, with pure, simple heart, accompanied by bitter tears of sorrow for our sins. After the paschal supper, our Lord in deepest humility, washed His disciples' feet, exhorting them to gentleness and humility; afterwards, He gave His flesh and blood under the appearance of bread and wine, for spiritual food and drink, thus instituting the Holy Sacrifice of Mass, and the Most Blessed Sa-

crament of the Altar, and ordained His apostles priests, by commanding them to do as He had done in commemoration of Him. After this He gave them His last instructions (*John* xv. 18.), speaking especially of brotherly love, said His last beautiful, high-priestly prayer, in which He particularly implored His Heavenly Father for the unity of His Church, went then, as usual, to Mount Olivet, where with prayer and resignation to the will of His Heavenly Father, in intense, deathlike agony, and with bloody sweat, He commenced His passion, and where He was by Judas betrayed by a treacherous kiss into the hands of the Jews, who then bound Him and led Him to the high priests, Annas and Caiphas, where He was sentenced by the council to death, and was denied by Peter.

The Introit of the Mass runs thus: We ought to glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ: in whom is our salvation, life, and resurrection: by whom we have been saved and delivered. (*Gal.* vi. 14.) May God have mercy on us and bless us: may his countenance shine upon us, and may he have mercy on us. (*Ps.* lxvi. 2.)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. *[See Good-Friday.]*

What special ceremonies are observed in this day's Mass?

The priest comes on the altar in white vestments, and the crucifix is covered with white in memory of the joy-giving institution of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar; the Gloria in excelsis, or Glory be to God on high, is solemnly sung while all the bells are rung, by which all Christians are called to render praise and gratitude for the institution of the Blessed Feast of Love; after the Gloria, the bells are silent again, and instead of them until Holy Saturday wooden instruments are used in the Church, to indicate her deep mourning for the passion and death of Jesus, to urge us also to spend these days in silent mourning, and in meditating upon the sufferings of Christ, and in memory of the shameful flight of the apostles at the capture of their master, and their silence during these days. At the consecration, the priest consecrates two hosts of which he takes one in Communion, and the other he preserves in the chalice for the following day, because no consecration takes place then. The officiating priest does not give the assisting priest the usual kiss before Communion, because on this day Judas betrayed his master with a kiss. After Mass, the consecrated host in the chalice and the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle, are taken in procession to the sacristy or a side-altar, which is done in memory of the earliest times of Christianity, when the consecrated hosts for the communicants and the sick, were kept in a specially prepared place, because there was no tabernacle on the altar. After the procession, the priests with the singers say vespers in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

EPISTLE. (i. *Cor.* xi. 20—32.) BRETHREN: When you come therefore together into one place, it is not now to eat the Lord's supper. For every one taketh before his own supper to eat. And one indeed is hungry, and another is drunk. What, have you not houses to eat and drink in? Or despise ye the church of God; and put them to shame that have not? What shall I say to you? Do I praise you? In this I praise you not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke, and said: Take ye and eat: this is my body which shall be delivered for you: this do for the commemoration of me. In like manner also the Chalice, after he had supped, saying: This Chalice is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as often as ye shall drink it, for the commemoration of me. For as often as you shall eat this bread, and drink the chalice, you shall shew the death of the Lord, until he come. Therefore whosoever shall eat this bread and drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord. Therefore are there many infirm and weak among you, and many sleep. But if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But whilst we are judged, we are chastised by the Lord: that we be not condemned with this world.

EXPLANATION. After Communion and the celebration of the Last Supper, the early Christians were accustomed to unite in a common repast, the richer furnishing the food, and the poor and rich, partaking of it in common, in token of brotherly love. This repast they called "Agape", "meal of love". At Corinth this was abused, for some before Communion eat that which they had brought, became intoxicated, and deprived the poor of their share. The Apostle reproves this abuse as an unworthy preparation for Communion, and recalls to the Corinthians the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, concerning which he had received a special revelation, instructing them what a terrible sin it was to partake of the body and blood of the Lord unworthily, for whoever does this, makes himself guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, that is, he makes himself guilty of the murder of the Lord, as if he had murdered Christ, had shed His blood, as St. Chrysostom

says, and eats and drinks his own judgment, that is, eternal damnation. – Therefore try yourself, O Christian, as often as you communicate, to see whether you have any grievous sin in your heart, whether you have confessed your sins, and have heartfelt sorrow for them.

GOSPEL. (*John* xiii. 1—15.) Before the festival day of the pasch, Jesus knowing that his hour was come that he should pass out of this world to the Father: having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them unto the end. And when supper was done, (the devil having now put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray him) knowing that the Father had given him all things into

his hands, and that he came from God, and goeth to God: he riseth from supper, and layeth aside his garments, and having taken a towel, girded himself. After that, he putteth water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of the disciples, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. He cometh therefore to Simon Peter. And Peter saith to him: Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered, and said to him: What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith to him: Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him: If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with me. Simon Peter saith to him: Lord, not only my feet, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him: He that is washed, needeth not but to wash his feet, but is clean wholly. And you are clean, but not all. For he knew who he was that would betray him; therefore he said: You are not all clean. Then after he had washed their feet, and taken his garments, being set down again, he said to them: Know you what I have done to you? You call me, Master, and Lord: and you say well, for so I am. If then I, being your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you so do you also.

Why did Jesus wash the feet of His disciples?

To give them a proof of His sincere love, and an example of His deep humility which they should imitate; to teach them, that even though they themselves were free from sin, and not unworthy to receive His most holy body and blood, their feet needed cleansing, that is, that they should be also purified from all evil inclinations which defile the heart as daily dust the feet, and prevent holy Communion from producing its perfect fruitful effects in the soul.

Why is it, that on this day only one priest says Mass at which the others receive Communion?

Because as on this day Christ, and He only, offered the unbloody Sacrifice, and having instituted the Blessed Sacrament, fed with His own hands His disciples with His flesh and blood, it is but proper, that in commemoration of this, the priests in one Church should receive the Blessed Sacrament from the hands of

one, according to the example of the apostles, but in sign of the priestly dignity which on this day Christ gave to the apostles and their successors, each priest wears a stole.

Why after the service are the altars denuded?

To show that Jesus, who is represented by the altar, took off, as it were, at the time of His passion, His divine glory, and yielded Himself up in utter humiliation into the hands of His enemies to be crucified (*Phil.* ii. 6. 7.), and that at the crucifixion He was forcibly stripped of His garments, which the soldiers divided among them, as foretold in the twenty first psalm, which is therefore said during this ceremony.—The faithful are urged to put off the old sinful man with his actions, and by humbling themselves become conformable to Christ.

Why is it, that spiritual superiors wash the feet of those under them, as do also the Catholic princes the feet of twelve poor persons?

This is in commemoration of the washing of feet by Christ, and in memory of that, all people, even the highest, should exercise the necessary virtues of humility and charity towards even the lowest, according to the example given by Jesus. Therefore these mentioned kiss the feet of the poor, and the pope presses them to his breast, giving to each person a silver and gold medal, on which is pictured the washing of the feet by Christ.

What are the Tenebrae and their signification?

They are the office prayers which the clergy say on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of this week, accompanied by lamentations, and different other ceremonies. The word Tenebrae means darkness, and represents the prayers formerly said in the dark hours of the morning. In these Tenebrae the Church mourns the passion and death of Jesus, and urges her children to return to God; she therefore makes use of the words of Jeremias, and especially those mournful words: "Jerusalem! Jerusalem! be converted to God, thy Lord!"

Why are these Tenebrae said in the evening?

In memory of that time when the early Christians spent the whole night preceding great festivals in prayer, which, later, when zeal diminished, was only done on their eves, and then only by the clergy, and is still done; also in order that we may consider the darkness lasting for three hours at the crucifixion of Christ, whence the name Tenebrae; and lastly, to represent by it that mourning of which darkness is the type.

Why, during the prayers of the clergy, are the lights in the triangular candlestick one after another extinguished?

Because the Tenebrae, as has been already remarked, in the earliest times of the Church, were held in the night, the candles were extinguished, one after another, as the breaking in of day

rendered them no longer necessary, and are now extinguished in memory of this. There is also a moral signification, that joy should more and more decrease, and our sadness more and more increase, the nearer we come to the contemplation of the death of Christ; again, at the time of the passion and death of Jesus, His apostles whom He calls the light of the world, one after another gradually left Him; at the death of Christ the earth was covered with darkness; that the Jews, who, blinded by pride, would not recognize Him as the Saviour of the world, fell by His death into the deepest darkness of hardened infidelity.

What is meant by the last candle which is carried lighted behind the altar, and after prayers are finished, is brought back again?

This candle signifies Christ, who, though, according to His human nature, died and laid for three days in the sepulchre, on the third day came forth from the grave, by His own power, as the true light of the world.

Why at the end of Tenebrae is a noise made with clappers?

This was formerly a sign, that service was over; it also signifies the earthquake which took place at Christ's death.

REMARK. In the Cathedrals the holy oils and Chrism which are used in baptism, confirmation, holy orders, and extreme unction, as also in consecrating baptismal fonts and altar stones, are blessed on this day. Let us thank our Lord for the institution of these Sacraments at which blessed oils are used.

How should we attend the Church service on this day?

As on this day the Church celebrates the annual commemoration of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament so, at the service, kneel down, O Christian, with devotion; bring to your mind, with living faith, that Jesus, your divine Teacher and Saviour, is really and truly here present. Adore Him as the Son of God, who became man and came upon the earth. Admire the love with which, that He might be always with us, He instituted the Blessed Sacrament. Render thanks to Him for all the valuable and instrumental graces which have flowed to you and to so many Christians from this Sacrament.

INSTRUCTION FOR GOOD-FRIDAY.

For the Jewish people this day was formerly the preparation day for Easter, and was called by them the Parasceve; for us Christians it is the day of the death and burial of our Lord, who on this day, being Himself both high priest and victim, offered Himself upon the cross for the salvation of the world.

Why do we Christians so honor this day?

Because it is the greatest of days from the beginning of the world to the consummation of all things. On this day were perfected the designs which God had from all eternity, as Jesus Himself expressed when He said: All is consummated; for on this day He was given up to the gentiles by the Jews, was scourged, was crowned with thorns, loaded with the cross, dragged to Calvary amid taunts and sneers, there nailed to the cross between two thieves, and by His painful death finished the great work of redemption.

Why had Christ to suffer so much to redeem us?

To show us what an immense evil is sin, for which, that He might satisfy God's justice, He underwent such cruel sufferings; because of His love for us, so great that He gave the last drop of His blood for us; because He rendered satisfaction not for some men only, but for all, that not one might be lost, but every one possess life everlasting. Look up to-day, and every day of thy life, to Christ on the cross, and see how God punishes sin, since He did not spare even His only begotten Son, who took upon Himself our sins, and for them died this cruel death. What death is due to thee, if thou dost not despise and fly from sin?

Why does the Church celebrate the commemoration of the passion of Christ in such solemn quietness?

That the faithful may be impressed to thank the Saviour for the redemption, and to move them by calm meditation on His passion to sincere love for Him. "For this reason," remarks St. Chrysostom, "St. Paul, even in his time, ordered the observance of this day, which the Christians always kept in deepest mourning and with rigorous fasting."

Why do we not observe Good-Friday with such festivities as do the Protestants? [in Europe.]

Because our grief at our Saviour's death is too great to permit us to celebrate it joyously, for nature herself mourned at His death; the sun was darkened, earth shook, and the rocks were rent. Although the Christian rejoices on this day in the grace of redemption through Christ, he is aware, that unless they strive to participate in the merits of the passion and death of Christ by sorrowing over their sins, by amendment and penance, that the joy of His children cannot be pleasing to God the Lord, and just this is the intention of the Church in the sad and touching solemnities of the day's service.

Why are there no candles lighted at the beginning of service?

To signify that on this day Christ, the Light of the world, became, at is were, extinguished.

Why does the priest prostrate himself before commencing the service?

That we should consider with him in deepest sorrow and humility how the Saviour died on the cross for our sins, and how unworthy we are on account of them to lift up our faces.

Why does the service commence with the reading of two lessons?

Because Christ died for Jews and Gentiles. The first lesson is from the Prophet Osee (*Os.* vi. 1—6.), and the other from Exodus, the contents of which refer to this, that by the bloody death of the immaculate Lamb Jesus we are healed of our sins, and redeemed from death.

After the first lesson the priest says the following

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, from whom both Judas received the punishment of his sin, and the thief the reward of his confession: grant us the effects of Thy mercy; that as our Lord Jesus Christ, at the time of His passion, bestowed on both different rewards according to their merits; so, having destroyed the old man in us, He may give us grace to rise again with Him. Who liveth.

Here follows the History of the Passion according to St. John; after which the priest, singing, brings to the Lord God the most tender and pathetic prayers in behalf of the one only true Church, that she may always increase, and that peace and unity may always remain with her; for the pope, that his government may be blessed; for the bishops, priests, the clergy, and the people, that they may serve God in justice; for those converted to the faith, that they may continue to grow in knowledge and in zeal for the holy religion; for rulers as defenders of the Church, that they may govern with wisdom and justice, and that those under them may be loyal to them with fidelity and obedience; for all the unfortunate, that God may have mercy on them; for heretics and apostates, that they may be brought back from error to the truth of the Catholic faith; for the Jews, that they may be given light; for the heathens, that they may abjure idols, and believe in one true God. Before each prayer the priest says Oremus [Let us pray], Flectamus genua [Let us kneel]; when kneeling, we say Amen, and at the call Levate [Rise up] we rise; except at the prayer for the Jews, when the priest does not kneel, because the Jews, kneeling, mocked our Lord. As Christ on this day prayed for all men, the Church desires, that we also pray for all men; say, therefore, the following

PRAYER. O Lord Jesus! who on the cross, while in excruciating pain, didst pray with a loud voice for all men: we humbly pray Thee for Thy vicar, the Pope N., for our

bishop N., for all the priests and clergy, for our civil government, for the neophytes, for the unfortunate and oppressed, for all Catholics, that Thou mayst preserve them in the true faith, and strengthen them, that they may serve Thee according to their different vocations. We pray Thee also for all unbelievers, and those separated from our Church, for the Jews, and for the heathens, that Thou mayst unite all in Thy holy Church, and bring them to eternal salvation. Amen.

What is done by the priest after these prayers?

The priest then goes down from the epistle side of the altar, takes the crucifix covered, and holding it towards the people, uncovers it so much that the head is seen, and sings in a low voice: Ecce lignum crucis, &c.: "Behold the wood of the cross on which hung the Saviour of the world!" The choir answers: Venite, adoremus: "Come, let us adore it!" at which all kneel, adoring Christ who died on the cross for us. The priest now comes forward to the corner, then to the middle of the altar; in the first place he uncovers the right side, in the latter place the whole, each time elevating the cross somewhat, and raising his voice, sings: Ecce lignum crucis. In this manner should the image of the crucified Redeemer, which has been hidden from our eyes since Passion-Sunday, make a deeper impression upon us, and show us how the doctrines of Jesus crucified became gradually known to the world. Jesus is adored three times, because He was mocked three times: in the courtyard of the highpriest, in Pilate's house, and on Mount Calvary. The priest then lays the cross on a cloth spread out on a cushion on the gospel side, to represent the laying of Christ in the sepulchre; he then goes some distance back and takes off his shoes, as Moses was commanded to when he was about to approach almighty God; he then kneels and meditates on the passion of Christ; goes a few steps forward, again kneels, and still a third time, this time directly in front of the crucifix. He here adores Jesus with humility, considers His infinite love, which brought Him to the cross, and laid Him in the sepulchre for the redemption of us sinful creatures, and then kisses in spirit with reverence the sacred wounds of Jesus, which He received on our account. During this veneration of the cross the choir divides and chants in alternation the versicles called the Reproaches, and between each part of the canticle, the following words in Greek and Latin: "O Holy God! O Most Holy One! O Holy Immortal One! have mercy on us!" In these versicles Christ tenderly and lovingly reproaches the people who crucified Him, which we may also take to ourselves, who have so often crucified Jesus anew by sin. They are therefore called reproaches, words of complaint, and continue during the veneration

of the cross by the priest. Afterwards a hymn of praise composed by St. Fortunatus, is sung in honor of the victory gained on the cross by our Saviour, which calls upon us also to render praise and thanks to Jesus crucified.

Adore, also, in deepest humility, and by a threefold advance, the Redeemer who died on the cross, and is now victoriously enthroned; ask, with fullest contrition, forgiveness of your sins; kiss with sincere love His sacred wounds, promising to love all men, even your enemies, and to have pity on all in distress, according to His example.

What comes after the veneration of the cross?

The sacred hosts consecrated on Holy Thursday, and kept in the chalice, are brought by the priest in procession, from the place where they were deposited, to the high altar, incensed in sign of adoration, and after a few short prayers the priest lifts up one of them with the right hand, breaks it, puts one part in the chalice and communicates, and soon after leaves the altar.

Is there, then, no Mass said on this day?

No; for on this day there is no bread and wine consecrated, which is the essential part of the Sacrifice of the Mass, but one of the hosts consecrated the day previously is uplifted, and received in Communion, while the other is exposed in the ostensorium for public adoration.

REMARK. This is the usual custom. Where no special privileges are granted, the sacred Host is laid in a pix, or put into the tabernacle on an altar especially prepared for it, ornamented with lights and flowers, where the faithful can visit and adore the most Blessed Sacrament. (*Trans.*)

Why is no Mass said on this day?

Because, Jesus Christ, the first high priest after the order of Aaron, having this day sacrificed Himself on the altar of the cross in a bloody offering, it is not mete, that His death sacrifice should be to-day repeated even in an unbloody manner. Besides this, Mass is a joyous and comforting sacrifice, and is therefore omitted because of our mourning.

What devotions may be practised to-day?

Besides adoring Jesus in the holy sepulchre, the stations may be said, meditations made on the sufferings of our Lord, and it realized in our hearts, as St. Augustine says: "Behold the wounds of Jesus hanging upon the cross, the blood of the dying, the price of our redemption! To kiss the bowed head, to caress the pierced side, to embrace the extended arms, the whole body sacrificed for our redemption. Consider what all this is, that He may be wholly in your heart who is nailed to the cross for you."

MANNER OF CONTEMPLATING CHRIST'S BITTER PASSION.

Christ also suffered for us: leaving you an example that you should follow his steps. (*Peter* i. 2, 21.)

"WHence does it come," writes St. Alphonsus Ligouri, "that so many of the faithful look with so much indifference at Christ on the cross? At most they assist during Holy Week at the commemoration of His death without any feeling of gratitude or compassion, as if it were a fable or an event in which they had no interest. Know they not, or believe they not what the gospel relates of Christ's passion? Indeed they know it, and believe it, but do not think of it. It is impossible, that he who believes and meditates, should fail to become burning with love for a God who for love of him suffers and dies." But why, we may ask here, are there so many who draw so little soul benefit even from the contemplation of the passion and death of Jesus? Because they fail to consider the example of virtue which Christ gives us in His sufferings, and fail to imitate it.

"The cross of Christ," says St. Augustine, "is not only a bed of death, but a pulpit of instruction." It is not only a bed upon which Christ dies, but the pulpit from which He teaches us what to imitate and to do. It should now be our special aim in meditating upon the passion of Christ, to imitate the virtues which Jesus allows to shine forth in the highest degree in His passion and death, and which He permits us to see, as in a mirror. But just this it is which so many neglect. They usually content themselves with compassion when they see Christ enduring so many and such different sufferings, but see not with what love, humility, and meekness He bears them, and so do not endeavor to imitate these virtues. That you, Christian soul, may avoid this mistake, and that you may draw the greatest possible benefit for your soul, from the contemplation of the passion and death of Christ, attend to that which is said of it by that pious servant of God, Alphonse Rodriguez:

We must endeavor to derive from the meditation on the mysteries of the passion and death of Christ this effect, that we may imitate His virtues, and this by slowly and attentively considering each virtue by itself, exercising ourselves in framing a very great desire for it in our hearts, making a firm resolution to practise it in words and works, and also to conceive a holy aversion and horror of the opposite vice; for instance, when contemplating Christ's condemnation to the death of the cross by Pilate, consider the humility of Jesus Christ, who being God, as humbly as He was innocent, voluntarily submitted and silently accepted the unjust sentence and the ignominious death. Here you see from the example given by Jesus, how you should despise

yourself, patiently bear all evil, unjust judgment, and detraction, and even to seek them with joy as giving us occasion to resemble Him. To produce in yourself these necessary effects and resolutions, you should at each mystery contemplate the following particulars:

First, Who is it that suffers? The most innocent, the holiest, the most loving, the only begotten Son of the Almighty Father, the Lord of heaven and earth. Secondly, What pains and torment, exterior and interior, does He suffer? Thirdly, In what manner does He suffer, with what patience, humility, meekness, love, &c., does He bear all ignominy and outrage? Fourthly, For whom does He suffer? For all men who have died, still live, will live, will be born, for His enemies and His executioners, for each and every man. Fifthly, By whom does He suffer? By Jews and heathens, by soldiers and tyrants, by the devil and all impious children of the world to the end of time, and all who were then united in spirit with His enemies and who aided His tortures. Sixth, Why does He suffer? To make reparation for all the sins of all the world, to pay the debt of all sins, to satisfy to the justice of God, to reconcile the Heavenly Father to us, to open heaven, to give us His infinite merits, that we may from them have strength to follow the way to heaven. At the consideration of each of these points, and indeed at each mystery of the passion of Christ, the imitation of the example of His virtues is the main object, because the true life and perfection of the Christian consists in the imitation of Jesus. Place vividly before your mind, therefore, at the consideration of each stage of the passion of Christ, the virtue which He practised in it, contemplate it and ask yourself, whether you possess this virtue, or whether you still find in yourself the opposite vice. In the latter case make an act of contrition, excite in yourself a sincere desire of the opposite virtue, make the firm resolution henceforth to practise this virtue and to extirpate this vice, and ask our Lord for the grace to do so. In this way you will draw the greatest advantage from the contemplation of Christ's passion, and will resemble Christ, and, as the pious Louis of Granada says, there can be no greater honor and adornment for a Christian than to resemble his divine Master, not in the way that Lucifer desired, but in that which He pointed out, when He said: "I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so do you also."

THE PASSION,

OR THE SUFFERINGS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,

ACCORDING TO THE FOUR EVANGELISTS.

When Jesus had given his last instructions and had ended the hymn with his disciples, they went out together to

Mount Olivet, and Jesus said to them: All you shall be scandalized in me this night; for it is written: I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be dispersed. But after I shall be risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. And Peter answering, said to him: Although all shall be scandalized in thee, I will never be scandalized. Jesus said to him: Amen, I say to thee, that in this night before the cock crow twice, thou wilt deny me thrice. But Peter spoke the more vehemently: Yea, though I should die with thee, I will not deny thee; and in like manner said all the disciples. And Jesus went with them over the brook Cedron, where there was a garden which he entered with his disciples. And Judas also, who betrayed him, knew the place; because Jesus had often resorted thither with his disciples. Judas, the traitor, therefore, having received a band of soldiers and servants from the chief priests and the Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns, and torches, and weapons. And Jesus said to his disciples: Sit you here, while I pray. Pray, that ye enter not into temptation. And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to grow sorrowful and to be sad. And he said to them: My soul is sorrowful even unto death, stay you here and watch with me. And when he had withdrawn from them a little distance—about a stone's cast—kneeling down he prayed, saying: "Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee, remove this chalice from me, but not what I will, but what thou wilt." And there appeared to him an angel from heaven strengthening him, and being in agony, he prayed the longer. And his sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground. And when he rose up from prayer and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow. And he said to them: Why sleep you? What! could you not watch one hour with me? To Peter he said: Simon, sleepest thou? Couldst thou not watch one hour? Arise! watch ye, and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh weak. Again he went the second time and prayed, saying: "My Father, if this chalice may not pass away, but I must drink it, thy will be done." And when he returned, he found them again asleep (for their eyes were heavy), and they knew not what to answer him. And leaving them, he went again: and he prayed the third time, saying the selfsame word. Then he cometh to his disciples, and saith to them: Sleep ye now, and take your rest. It is enough: the hour is come: behold, the Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go! Behold, he that will betray me, is at hand. And while he was yet speaking, cometh Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the ancients. And he that betrayed him, had given them a sign, saying: Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he, lay hold on him, and lead him away carefully. And when he was come, immediately going up to Jesus,

he said: Hail, Rabbi; and he kissed him. And Jesus said to him: Friend, whereto art thou come? Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss? Jesus, therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth and said to them: Whom seek ye? They answered him: Jesus of Nazareth. And Jesus said: I am he. And Judas also, who betrayed him, stood with them. As soon therefore as he had said to them: I am he: they went backward and fell to the ground. Again therefore he asked them: Whom seek ye? And they said: Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered: I have told you, that I am he. If therefore you seek me, let these go their way. That the word might be fulfilled which he had said (*John* xvii. 12.): Of them whom thou hast given me, I have not lost any one. Then they came up, and laid hands on Jesus, and held him. And they that were about him, his disciples, seeing what would follow, said: Lord, shall we strike with the sword? And one of them, Simon Peter, stretching forth his hand, drew out his sword; and striking the servant of the high priest, cut off his right ear. And the name of the servant was Malchus. And Jesus said to them: Suffer ye thus far. And to Peter: Put up again thy sword into its place; for all that take the sword, shall perish by the sword. Thinkest thou, that I cannot ask my Father, and he will give me presently more than twelve legions of angels; how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that so it must be done? (*Ps.* xxii., *Is.* liii.) The chalice which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? And he touched the servant's ear and healed him. And Jesus said to the chief priests and the magistrates of the temple, and the ancients that were come to him: You are come out as it were to a robber, with swords and clubs to apprehend me. I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and you laid not hands on me. Now all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled; but this is your hour and the power of darkness. Then the band, and the tribune, and the servants of the Jews took Jesus, and they bound him. And the disciples all leaving him, fled. And only one followed him, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body, and they laid hold on him; but he casting off the linen cloth, fled from them naked. And they led Jesus away to Annas first, for he was father-in-law to Caiphas who was high priest for that year. Now Caiphas was he who had given that counsel to the Jews: that it was expedient, that one man should die for the people. (*John* xi. 49, 50.) And Annas sent him bound to Caiphas the high priest. And they brought Jesus to the high priest's house, and all the chief priests, and the ancients were assembled together. The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples and of his doctrine. Jesus answered him: I have spoken openly to the world: I have always taught in the synagogue and in the temple, whither all the Jews resort; and in secret I have spoken nothing. Why askest thou me? Ask them who have heard what

I have spoken to them: behold, they know what things I have said. And when he had said these things, one of the officers standing by, gave Jesus a blow, saying: Answerest thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him: If I have spoken evil, give testimony of the evil: but if well, why strikest thou me? But the chief priests, the ancients, and all the council sought evidence against Jesus, that they might put him to death; and they found not, whereas many false witnesses had come in; for their witness did not agree. And last of all there came two false witnesses, and they said: We heard him say, I will destroy this temple made with hands, and within three days I will build another not made with hands. And their witness did not agree. And the high priest rising up, said to him: Answerest thou nothing to the things which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace and answered nothing. And the high priest asked him and said to him: Art thou Christ, the Son of the blessed God? I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us if thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith to him: Thou hast said it. Nevertheless I say to you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his garments, saying: He hath blasphemed, what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now you have heard the blasphemy. What think you? But they answering, said: He is guilty of death. Then they did spit in his face, and buffetted and blindfolded him, and struck him with the palms of their hands, and said to him: Prophesy unto, O Christ, who is he that struck thee?

And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. And that disciple was known to the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the court of the high priest. But Peter stood at the door without. The other disciple, therefore, who was known to the high priest, went out, and spoke to the porteress, and brought in Peter to the house of the high priest. Now the servants and officers stood at a fire of coals, because it was cold, and warmed themselves. And with them was Peter also standing and warming himself. And when they were sitting around the fire, Peter sat in the midst of them, that he might see the end. And there cometh to him a certain maid-servant of the high priest—it was the porteress—and when she had seen Peter warming himself, looking on him, she saith: Thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. Art thou not also one of this man's disciples? But he denied before them all, saying: Woman, I am not. I know him not. I neither know, nor understand what thou sayst. And he went before the court, and the cock crew. And as he went out of the gate, another maid saw him, and she saith to them that were there: This man also was with Jesus of Nazareth, and the first maid—the porteress—looking at him again said to them: He is one of them; and after a little while another seeing him, said:

But thou art one of them. And Peter answered: I am not. And after the space as it were of one hour, one of the servants of the high priest (a kinsman to him whose ear Peter cut off) said to him: Did I not see thee in the garden with him? Of a truth, this man was also with him, for he is a Galilean. And after a little while they came that stood by, and said to Peter: Surely thou art one of them; for thou also art a Galilean, for even thy speech doth discover thee. But Peter again denied it, and said to them: Man, I know not what thou sayst. And he began to curse and swear, saying: I know not this man of whom you speak. And immediately while he was yet speaking, the cock crew the second time. And the Lord turning looked at Peter, and he remembered the word of Jesus which he had said: Before the cock crow twice, thou wilt deny me thrice; and going forth he wept bitterly.—

And when morning was come, all the chief priests, and scribes, and ancients of the people took counsel against Jesus, that they might put him to death. And they brought him also into their council and said to him: If thou be the Christ, tell us. And he said to them: If I shall tell you, you will not believe me, and if I shall also ask you, you will not let me go. But hereafter the Son of Man shall be sitting on the right hand of the power of God. Then said they all: Art thou the Son of God? And he said: You say that I am. And they said: What need we any further testimony? For ourselves have heard it from his own mouth. And the whole multitude rose up, and binding Jesus, led him away and delivered him to Pilate, the governor. Then Judas who betrayed him, seeing that he was condemned, repenting himself, brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and ancients, saying: I have sinned in betraying innocent blood. But they said: What is that to us? look thou to it. And casting down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed, and went, and hanged himself with an halter. But the chief priests having taken the pieces of silver, said: It is not lawful to put them in the corbona, because it is the price of blood. And after they had consulted together, they bought with them the potter's field, to be a burying place for strangers. For this cause that field was called Haceldama, that is, the field of blood, even to this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremias the Prophet, saying: And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was prized, whom they prized of the children of Israel. And they gave them unto the potter's field, as the Lord appointed to me.

And it was morning, and they went not into the hall, that they might not be defiled, but that they might eat the pasch. Pilate therefore went out to them and said: What accusation bring you against this man? They answered and said to him: If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up to thee. Pilate then said to them: Take him you and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said to him: It is not lawful for us to put any man to death. That the word of Jesus might be fulfilled which he said, signifying what death he should die. (*Matt.* xx. 19.) And they began to accuse him, saying: We have found this man perverting our nation, forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he is Christ the King. Pilate therefore went into the hall again, and called Jesus, and said to him: Art thou the king of the Jews? Jesus answered: Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or have others told it thee of me? Pilate answered: Am I a Jew? Thy own nation and the chief priest have delivered thee up to me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered: My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would certainly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now my kingdom is not from hence.

Pilate therefore said to him: Art thou a king then? Jesus answered: Thou sayest, that I am a king. For this was I born, for this I came into the world: that I should give testimony to the truth. Every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice. Pilate said to him: What is the truth? And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them: I find no cause in him. And the chief priests and ancients accused him of many things, but he answered nothing. And Pilate again saith to him: Answerest thou nothing? Behold in how many things they accuse thee. But Jesus still answered nothing; so that Pilate wondered. But they were more earnest, saying: He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place. But Pilate hearing Galilee, asked if the man were of Galilee? And when he understood, that he was of Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him away to Herod, who himself was also at Jerusalem in those days. And Herod seeing Jesus, was very glad, for he was desirous of a long time to see him, because he had heard many things of him, and he hoped to see some sign wrought by him. And he questioned him with many words. But he answered him nothing. And the chief priests and the scribes stood by, earnestly accusing him, and Herod with his army set him at nought, and mocked him, putting on him a white garment, and sent him back to Pilate. And Herod and Pilate were made friends that same day; for before they were enemies to one another. Then Pilate calling together the chief priests, and the magistrates, and the people, said to them: You have brought this man to me as one that perverteth the people, and behold, I having examined him before you, find no cause in this man touching those things wherein you accuse him. No, nor Herod neither. For I sent you to him, and behold, nothing worthy of death is done to him. I will chastise him therefore and release him. Now of necessity he was to release unto them one upon the festival day. And there was one called Barabbas, who was put in prison with some seditious men, who in the sedition had committed murder. And when the multitude was come up, they began to desire, that he would do as he had ever done unto them. And Pilate answered them and said: But you have a custom, that I should release one unto you at the pasch: will you therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him up out of envy. And while Pilate was sitting in the place of judgment, his wife sent to him, saying: Have thou nothing to do with that just man. For I have suffered many things in a dream this night because of him. But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barrabas to them and make Jesus away. And Pilate again asked them, saying: Whether will you of the two to be released unto you? And the whole multitude together cried out at once, saying: Away with this man, and release unto us Barrabas. And Pilate again spoke to them

desiring to release Jesus: What will you then, that I shall do with Jesus, that is called Christ, the King of the Jews? But they cried out again, saying: Crucify him, crucify him! And he said to them the third time: Why, what evil hath this man done? I find no cause of death in him. I will chastise him therefore, and let him go. But they were instant with loud voices requiring, that he might be crucified: and their voices prevailed.

Then therefore Pilate released unto them Barrabas, the murderer, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him up to their will. And the soldiers led him away into the court of the palace, and they called together the whole band, and they clothed him with purple, and platting a crown of thorns they put it upon him, and a reed in his right hand. And bowing the knee before him, they mocked him, saying: Hail, King of the Jews! And they gave

him blows; and spitting upon him, they took the reed and struck his head. And bowing their knees, they adored him. Pilate therefore went forth again and saith to them: Behold, I bring him forth to you, that you may know I find no cause in him. Jesus therefore came forth, bearing the crown of thorns and the purple garment. And he said to them: Behold the man! When the chief priests, therefore, and the servants had seen him, they cried out, saying: Crucify him, crucify him! Pilate saith to them: Take him you and crucify him; for I find no cause in him. The Jews answered him: We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. When Pilate therefore had heard this saying, he feared the more, and he entered into the hall again: and he said to Jesus: Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore saith to him: Speakest thou not to me? Knowest thou not, that I have power to crucify thee, and I have power to release thee? Jesus answered: Thou shouldst not have any power against me, unless it were given thee from above. Therefore he that hath delivered me to thee, hath the greater sin. And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him. But the Jews cried out, saying: If thou release this man, thou art not Caesar's friend. For whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Caesar. Now when Pilate had heard these words, he brought Jesus forth: and sat down in the judgment seat in the place that is called Lithostrotos, and in the Hebrew Gabbatha. And it was the Parasceve of the pasch about the sixth hour, and he saith to the Jews: Behold your king! But they cried out: Away with him, crucify him! Pilate saith to them: Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered: We have no king but Caesar. And Pilate seeing that he prevailed nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, being willing to satisfy the people, taking water, washed his hands before the people, saying: I am innocent of the blood of this just man: look you to it. And the whole people answering, said: His blood be upon us, and upon our children! Then he released unto them Barrabas, but Jesus he delivered up to them to be crucified.

And they led away Jesus, and after they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own garments upon him, and led him out to crucify him. And bearing his own cross, he went forth to that place which is called Calvary, but in Hebrew Golgatha. And as they led him away, they laid hold on one Simon of Cyrene, coming from the country, who was the father of Alexander and Rufus, and they laid the cross on him to carry after Jesus. And there followed him a great multitude of people, and of women who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning to them, said: Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over me, but weep for yourselves and your children. For behold, the days shall come wherein they shall say: Blessed are the barren and the wombs that have not borne, and the paps that have not

given suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains: Fall upon us, and to the hills: Cover us. For if in the green wood they do these things, what shall be done in the dry?

And there were also two malefactors led with him to be put to death. And when they were come to the place which is called Golgatha, which being interpreted is, the place of Calvary, they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh; and when he had tasted it, he would not drink. And they crucified him there; and with him the two robbers, one on the right hand, and the other at the left, and Jesus in the midst. And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith: And with the wicked he was reputed. (*Isai.* liii. 12.) And Jesus said: Father, forgive them, for they know not, what they do; and it was the third hour (twelve o' clock noon), and they crucified him. And Pilate wrote a title also, and he put it upon the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. This was to indicate his crime, and was written in letters of Greek, Hebrew, and Latin. And the soldiers placed it above his head. This title therefore many of the Jews did read: because the place where Jesus was crucified, was nigh to the city. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate: Write not, The King of the Jews, but that He said, I am the King of the Jews. Pilate answered: What I have written, I have written.

The soldiers, therefore, when they had crucified him, took his garments, and they made four parts, to every soldier a part, and also his coat. Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said then one to another: Let us not cut it, but let us cast lots for it whose it shall be. (That the scripture might be fulfilled which saith: They have parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture they have cast losts.) And the soldiers indeed did these things, sat then about the cross to watch over him. And they that passed by, blasphemed him, wagging their heads, and saying: Vah, thou that destroyest the temple of God, and in three days buildest it up again: save thyself, coming down from the cross. In like manner also the chief priests with the scribes, mocking, said one to another: He saved others, himself he cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe. He trusted in God; let him now deliver him, if he will have him; for he said: I am the Son of God. Also the soldiers reviled him, coming to him and saying: If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself. And one of the robbers, that were crucified with him, said the same, blaspheming and reviling him, saying: If thou be Christ, save thyself and us! But the other answering, rebuked him, saying: Neither dost thou fear God, seeing thou art under the same condemnation. And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done no evil. And he said to Jesus: Lord, remember me when

thou shalt come into thy kingdom. And Jesus said to him: Amen, I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with me in paradise.

And there were there many women afar off who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him, and saw all. Among them was Mary Magdalen, and Mary, the mother of James the Less, and Joseph, and Salome, the mother of the sons of Zebedee. By the cross of Jesus stood his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen. When Jesus therefore had seen his mother and the disciple standing whom he loved, he saith to his mother: Woman, behold thy son! After that he said to the disciple: Behold thy mother! And from that hour the disciple took her to his own. And it was almost the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened: and at the ninth hour (three o' clock in the afternoon) Jesus cried out: Eloi, Eloi, lamma sabacthani? which is, being interpreted: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And some of the bystanders hearing, said: Behold, he calleth Elias. Afterwards Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled (*Ps.* lxviii.), said: I thirst! Now there was a vessel set there full of vinegar, and one running with others filling a sponge with vinegar, and putting it upon a reed, held it up to Jesus, and gave him to drink, saying: Stay, let us see, if Elias will come to take him down. Jesus therefore, when he had taken the vinegar, said: It is consummated! and Jesus again crying with a loud voice, said: Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit! And bowing his head, he gave up the ghost.*) And the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom, and the earth quaked, and the rocks were rent. And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints that had slept, arose. And the centurion who stood over against him, seeing that crying out in this manner he gave up the ghost, said: Indeed this man was the Son of God. And also those that were there and watched over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake, and the other events, were terrified and said: He was indeed the Son of God. And all the multitude of them that were come together to that sight and saw the things that were done, returned striking their breasts. Then the Jews (because it was the Parasceve), that the bodies might not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath-day (for that was a great Sabbath-day), besought Pilate, that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. The soldiers therefore came, and they broke the legs of the first, and of the other that was crucified with him. But after they had come to Jesus, when they saw, that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers with a spear opened his side, and immediately there came out blood and water.

*) At these words the priest and the whole congregation fall on their knees, to meditate in deep devotion on the mystery of the death of Jesus.

(And he that saw it, hath given testimony, and his testimony is true; and he knoweth that he saith true; that you also may believe. For these things were done, that the scripture might be fulfilled: You shall not break a bone of him. And again another scripture saith: They shall look on him whom they pierced.)

And when evening was now come (because it was the Parasceve, that is, the day before the Sabbath), Joseph of Arimathea, a noble counsellor and just man (the same had not consented to their counsel and doing), who was also expecting the kingdom of God, and was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, came and went in boldly to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. But Pilate wondered that he should be already dead. And sending for the centurion, he asked him if he were already dead. And

when he had understood it by the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph, and commanded, that it should be delivered to him. And Joseph buying fine linen, and taking him down, wrapped him in it. And Nicodemus also came, he who at the first came to Jesus by night (*John* iii.), bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes about one hundred pound weight. They took therefore the body of Jesus, and bound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now there was in the place, where he was crucified, a garden: and in the garden a new sepulchre, which Joseph had caused to be hewn out of a rock, wherein no man yet had been laid. There therefore, because of the Parasceve of the Jews, they laid Jesus, because the sepulchre was nigh at hand. And he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre and went his way. It was the day of the Parasceve and the Sabbath drew on. And the women who had come with him from Galilee, Mary Magdalen, and the other Mary, Joseph's mother, following after saw the sepulchre, and saw how the body was laid, and returning they prepared spices and ointments; and on the Sabbath-day they rested according to the commandment.

[The following is sung as the gospel.]

And the next day, which followed the day of preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees came together to Pilate, saying: Sir, we have remembered, that that seducer said, while he was yet alive: After three days I will rise again. Command therefore the sepulchre to be guarded until the third day: lest perhaps his disciples come and steal him away, and say to te people, he is risen from the dead: and the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said to them: You have a guard; go, guard it as you know. And they departing, made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting guards.

THE PEOPLE AT THE CROSS AND THE PEOPLE OF TO-DAY.

AT Golgatha, in sight of the temple and city of Jerusalem, before the eyes of two or three millions of Jews, who had come from all lands of the earth at Easter-time to the city, Jesus, the Son of God, hung upon the cross, an expiatory sacrifice for mankind burdened with all manner of sin. Near the cross of her dying Son stood Mary, His mother, filled with grief; by her side John, the loved disciple, and kneeling at the foot of the cross almost insensible from sorrow and anguish, convulsively winding her arms around the wood of the cross, was Mary Magdalen, the penitent. On the right hand, on a cross, hung a criminal penitently turned towards the Saviour; on the left hand, groaned on another cross another criminal of impenitent heart, blaspheming the Holy One of Israel. Around the agonizing Saviour stood the Scribes and Pharisees, that hypocritical gang of practised mis-

creants, whose hatred persecuted the innocent Lamb Jesus, even in death, who blind to all the prophecies of the prophets whose books they had at hand and read, blind to the actual miracles which Jesus, to prove His divinity and His mission, wrought before their eyes, filled with envy and hatred reviled the dying Redeemer. At a distance there stood a crowd of curious, indifferent people, who had come to keep the Easter-festival, had heard of Jesus and were present at His crucifixion, and not far from them the rough soldiers and executioners lay around, dividing among themselves the Saviour's clothes and casting lots for his coat.

This was the society that surrounded the Son of God and Redeemer of the world bleeding on the cross, and in their different phases are types of the men of to-day.

Only three persons were there who near the cross, clung to the Saviour in faith that could never waver, and in truest love ready to die with Him, and for Him. There were but three who suffered all taunts and sneers, all revilings and blasphemies to pass over them, and departed not from the cross; they were Mary, John, and Magdalen. As these then are all now who, like Mary and John, yet pure and innocent, or like Magdalen weeping over their sins, confess Jesus with their heart and lips, cling faithfully to Him, and permit neither persecution nor death to separate them from Him. As then by the cross, so to-day is the number of the faithful small, and large the number of those who, like the careless spectators of the crucifixion, are certainly not decided enemies of Jesus crucified, but certainly not His decided friends. They have indeed been baptized in the name of Jesus, they keep externally with the Catholic Church, which Christ founded, but they are sunk in lukewarmness, have no living faith, and are wavering between the world and Jesus, to and fro like a reed. They fear the sneers of the socalled learned and enlightened, so many of whom are well represented by the Scribes and Pharisees, who, having no faith in Christ themselves, bear in their hearts only hatred and contempt of His Church; they shun the cross, because it is too heavy for their sensuality; they do not, it is true, commit public crimes, and do think much of an upright name, occasionally keep the law of the Church, but are accessible to every error; their ears inclined to every blasphemy against the religion of Jesus, and its servants, the priests. Instead of standing fearlessly and boldly for Christ, for the holy faith He has taught, and the Church teaches, they draw away, are silent, even go with the Church's enemies that they may not be sneered at. Neither hot nor cold, that comes true of them which is written: Because thou art neither hot nor cold, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth. (*Apoc.* ii. 16.) These lukewarm, indifferent Christians the Lord casts away from Him as nauseous saliva, and leaves them to be destroyed. Of these lukewarm, indifferent Christians are many who resemble the Pharisees at the

cross. They are those of our day who purposely close their eyes to the light of truth, who have put aside faith in Jesus, and are no longer open to instruction. Their pride, their high-mindedness has blinded them, they wish with their poor reason to comprehend the mysteries of the Almighty, wish with their small understanding to fathom His ways, even, in their daring, seek to be equal to God; they deny every revealed truth, they deny heaven and hell, they propose to live like the animals, without God,—but their end is ruin! But few of them having seen their error, ever turn repentingly to Jesus, as the robber on the cross, on His right hand; obdurate as the thief and murderer at His left, they cease not to blaspheme the crucified, and to revile His holy Church. With these stand the apostates and unbelievers, who, like the soldiers and executioners, divide among themselves His clothes, and cast lots for His seamless garment. Those clothes which the soldiers divided among themselves, are the truths which the apostates and heretics yet retain among themselves after their apostacy from the Church. They have divided these truths, for they have separated themselves into thousands of sects, and possess only portions of the one truth, which Jesus has laid down in His Church, whole and complete. Over His seamless garment they have cast lots.

This seamless vesture of Christ is His holy Church, that cannot be separated or divided, is one, and must remain one to the end of time. Concerning this one true Church, the sects all quarrel, all wanting to be the true Church without considering that, as but one soldier, by the lots, received Christ's seamless garment, so only one association of men can be the true Church, and that is the association which Christ has chosen for His Church—the apostles and their successors, the Roman Catholic bishops and priests.

Thus is the association of Jesus' cross on Golgatha, imitated in the people of to-day. As then on Golgatha so to-day the world is split in parties; into the pure and innocent, the repenting sinners, and obdurate villains, into faithful, decided adherents of Jesus and His holy Church, and into lukewarm, wavering nominal Christians, into professed infidels, apostates, and heretics.

To which party do you belong, O Christian? To which do you wish to belong? Choose! The time of the division is near. The Lord already holds in His hand the winnowing shovel to clear His floor. Are you not a decided adherent of Jesus and His Church? then will you be blown away like chaff in the storm that is gathering. Do you keep with the small group at the cross, in persevering courage? then will you stand firm, and on the day when the cross shall appear in the clouds of heaven, you, with Mary, the mother of the faithful, with John and with Magdalen, will triumph forever, as a victorious knight of the cross. Decide!

INSTRUCTION FOR HOLY SATURDAY.

Why is this day called Holy Saturday?

Because on this day Jesus, the Holy of Holiest, through whom we also should become holy, rested in the sepulchre, and because the Church to-day receives the blessed baptismal water, by which the unbaptized is born again to a new, holy life, which is also indicated by the blessed fire and the Easter-Candle.

Why is new fire struck from a flint, blessed, and the lamps and candles in the Church lighted from it?

In old times it was customary to strike a new fire, bless it, and light the candles by it every day, and later every Saturday; it is said, that in the eleventh century this ceremony was restricted to Holy Saturday. The fire is struck from a stone to indicate, that Christ is the light of the world, and the stone which the Jews rejected, has now become the corner stone of His Church (*Ps.* cxvii. 22.); that the divine Son, the light of the world, was apparently extinguished at His death, but at His resurrection shone anew; that all those who in Church to-day are physically lighted by this fire, may one day be filled anew, in the future life, with spiritual light. This fire is blessed, because the Church blesses every thing that is used in her service in Church, and because the light and fire used in Church must be holy, for they represent Christ, who brought the fire of love upon earth with which to enkindle our hearts. (*Luke* xii. 49.)

What is represented by the triple candlestick?

The triple candlestick represents the most Holy Trinity of which the second Divine Person came down to earth as the true light. For this reason the priest (or deacon), sings three times at the lighting of each candle: Lumen Christi, "Light of Christ," and kneeling three times humbly adores the Triune Deity, and especially the true divine light of Christ for which he says Deo gratias, "Thanks be to God".

What is the Easter-Candle?

It is an emblem of Christ, who has risen from death, of whom the pillar of fire which led the children of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt, was a prototype, as Christ, the true light, has led us from the bondage of Satan into the freedom of the children of God. The five holes in the candle represent the five wounds of Jesus by which mankind was healed (i. *Pet.* ii. 24.), and the five grains of frankincense signify the spices with which the body of our Lord was embalmed.

Why are the Easter-Candle and all the others lighted from the triple candle?

To show that Christ was begotten by the Father of light from all eternity, and is therefore true God from true God, light from light; that from God, through Christ, He being the light of the world, comes all man's enlightenment, and is diffused by the grace of God over all. (ii. *Cor.* iv. 6.)

To what do the twelve lessons, sung after the blessing of the baptismal water, all point?

They point to the baptism in which we are born again to a new life.

Why is the baptismal water blessed with so many ceremonies, and what is its signification?

The baptismal water signifies the blood of Christ by which our souls are purified, and in which the devil is drowned as Pharao in the Red Sea, and is blessed with so many ceremonies, that the different effects of baptism may be known, and that this holy Sacrament may be administered and received with the more reverence, devotion, and sanctity.

What is the meaning of these ceremonies?

The priest with his hand parts the water into the form of a cross, to illustrate that God gives the secret virtue to this water, through Christ who died on the cross, of changing all those born in original sin into holy people. He touches the surface of the water with the palm of his hand, to show that the Holy Ghost is over this water as at the creation, and bestows many graces on those who are baptized. He blesses it, signing it three times with the sign of the cross, because the water receives its sin-cleansing power only through the sufferings and the merits of Christ, from the Father, by the cooperation of the Holy Ghost. The baptismal water is thrown by the priest towards the four parts of the earth, because the grace of baptism should reach all nations. The priest breathes on the water three times in the form of a cross: the Creator breathed upon the first man, and breathed into him the breath of life, Christ breathed upon the apostles the Holy Ghost who by His grace and power revives and sanctifies those who are baptized. The Easter-Candle (emblem of Christ, risen from the dead), is dipped three times, and each time deeper into the water, to show that the baptized should become more and more enlightened through the light of Christ's doctrine, more and more penetrated by its divinity, more and more purified from sin. The people are sprinkled with this water to remind all those present who have received sanctification in baptism, and have lost it by sin, that they should strive by tears of repentance to regain it. Finally, oil and

chrism are mixed in the water as a sign that the grace of the Holy Ghost which is represented by the oil and chrism, is given in its fulness to the water; and also, that the baptized should, after baptism, devote themselves exclusively to the service of Christ, the Anointed One, and unite themselves in love to Him.

Why is the baptismal water blessed only on this day and on the Saturday before Pentecost?

Because in early times adults and neophytes were baptized only on these days; and because the Saviour, risen, is the example of a soul sanctified by baptism and by the Holy Ghost, the Author of all sanctity and the true fountain of the grace of baptism.

How should we assist at the blessing of the baptismal water?

With sentiments of sincere gratitude for having been given the holy grace of baptism; with the firm resolution of preserving our baptismal innocence, or if we have lost it, of obtaining it again by penance. We should renew our baptismal vows on this day especially, first by saying the apostle's creed, making acts of faith, hope, and love, and an act of contrition, and then saying with heart and lips: "I renounce the devil, all his pride, and all his suggestions."

Why does the priest prostrate himself after blessing the baptismal water, rising again when the litany of the saints has been sung?

To most humbly ask God, by the intercession of the saints, that He would give to all men without exception the grace of baptism, that as all men have been dead and buried in sin, so they may rise with Christ as new creatures to grace and eternal life.

Why are the altars redecorated on this day?

Because the Church, the beloved bride of Christ, desires to announce in advance to her children the glad tidings, that the Lord has risen from the dead; she decorates herself therefore, and causes the bells to peal and joyous hymns to resound. It also refers to Christ, at His resurrection, having adorned Himself with a glorious, incorruptible body.

Why is there no Introit in this day's Mass?

The Introit of Mass was formerly an entire psalm, sung while the people were assembling in Church; but as in early times the people on Easter were already assembled and assisting at the ceremonies, no Introit was sung at the Vigil Mass, as to-day, although Mass is now said in the morning, the Church having abolished the night vigils, on account of abuses.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who enlightenest this most sacred night by the glory of the resurrection of

the Lord; preserve in the new offspring of Thy family the spirit of adoption Thou hast given them; that being renewed in body and soul, they may serve Thee with purity of heart. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Colos.* iii. 1—4.) Brethren: If you be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above; where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God: mind the things that are above, not the things that are upon the earth. For you are dead; and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ shall appear, who is your life; then you also shall appear with him in glory. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul places Christ's resurrection before us as the example and motive of the spiritual resurrection from sin, which should be effected in us by the holy Sacraments at Easter time.—With Christ we should die to the world, and live hidden in Him, if we desire to rise at the Last Day with Him in glory and be acknowledged before all men by Him as His own.

After the epistle the priest says three times: Alleluia! as a joyful exclamation over the Redeemer's triumphant victory.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxxviii. 1—7.) In the end of the Sabbath, when it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalen and the other Mary to the sepulchre. And behold, there was a great earthquake. For an angel of the Lord descended from heaven; and coming, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it: and his countenance was as lightning, and his raiment as snow. And for fear of him, the guards were struck with terror, and became as dead men. And the angel answering, said to the women: Fear not you; for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he is risen as he said. Come, and see the place where the Lord was laid. And going quickly, tell ye his disciples that he is risen: and behold, he will go before you into Galilee: there you shall see him. Lo, I have foretold it to you.

What are we to learn from this gospel?

That we, too, will receive the plenitude of divine grace and heavenly blessings, if like these pious women we seek Christ early, that is, by making a good intention before we begin our work.

Why is there no Credo or Agnus Dei said, nor the kiss of peace given, and short vespers said after communion?

Formerly, and in Rome even now, the Credo or confession of faith is said by the newly baptized, the Agnus Dei was sung in the litany of the saints, and these are therefore omitted in the Mass. The kiss of peace is not given, because Christ has not yet said to His disciples, Peace be with you. Short vespers are said after the priest's communion, because this day is a type of the eternal Sabbath in heaven which has no vespers, that is, evening.

Do not omit to-day to once more visit the holy sepulchre, to adore Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, to thank Him for His passion and death, and to honor His sorrowful mother. If in the evening the solemn ceremonies of the resurrection are held, assist at them and there make the repeated resolution to rise from the sleep of sin and begin a new life with Christ.

INSTRUCTION FOR EASTER.

What is the festival of Easter or Pasch?

Aster, in Latin Pascha, signifies going by, passing over, and has this historical origin: Under Pharao, King of Egypt, the Jews in that country groaned in intolerable bondage. God had at last mercy on His people, and the hour of freedom came. By His command an angel struck with death the first born of the Egyptians, from the hut of the laborer to the palace of the king. The Jews had been already ordered by God to be ready for emigration, but to first kill a lamb, eat it in their houses in common, and to sprinkle the door-posts of their houses with its blood. And the angel of death, by order of God, went by the doors sprinkled with the blood of the lamb, and did not harm to any child of the Israelites, whilst he slew all the first born sons of the Egyptians. In grateful memory of this passing of the angel over their doors, the Jews observed the festival of Easter, the Pasch, the Passover. After the death of Jesus, the apostles introduced the same festival into the Church in grateful remembrance of the day on which Jesus, the true Easter-Lamb, took away our sins by His blood, freed us from the angel of eternal death, and passed us over to the freedom of the children of God.

Where, during this time, was Christ's holy soul?

In Limbo, that is, in that place in the lower regions where the souls of the just who died before Christ, were awaiting, but not in suffering, the redemption, for they were yet in original sin. To these just went the soul of Jesus after death, to console them and to announce to them their near redemption.

What have we to expect from the resurrection of Christ?

That our bodies, though rotten in the grave, will rise again from death. (*Rom.* viii. 11.) For if Christ our head is alive, then we His members must also become alive again, because a living head cannot be unless the members also live.

What is meant by the Alleluia sung in Easter time?

In English Alleluia means, Praise the Lord, and is a canticle of joy of the Church at the resurrection of Christ, and the hope of eternal happiness which He has obtained for us by it.

Why does the Church on this day bless eggs, bread, and meat?

To direct the faithful that, the time of fasting having now ended, they are not to give themselves up to unbounded gluttony, but should, with thanks to God, use their food simply for the necessary preservation of physical strength.

At the Introit the Church introduces Christ, her Head, as addressing His Heavenly Father in these words: I am risen, and am as yet with you. Allel.: thou hast stretched forth thy hand to me, Allel.: thy knowledge has become wonderful, Allel. Allel. (*Ps.* cxxxviii.) Lord, thou hast tried me, and known me: thou hast known my sitting down and my uprising. Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who, on this day, by Thy only begotten Son's victory over death, didst open for us a passage to eternity; grant that our prayers, which Thy preventing grace inspireth, may by Thy help become effectual. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (i. *Cor.* v. 7—8.) BRETHREN: Purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new paste, as you are unleavened. For Christ, our pasch, is sacrificed. Therefore let us feast, not with the old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul here exhorts us, as the Jews were on this day commanded to eat the paschal lamb with unleavened bread, abstaining on these days from the old leaven, that so we should at this time sweep away the old leaven, that is, the sins previously committed, and perhaps not yet sufficiently regretted or even confessed, by a good confession, and true penance, and should partake of the paschal lamb, which is Christ, with a pure, sincere heart, in holy Communion.

Often during the octave of this festival say with the Church: "Alleluia! Praise to the Lord, for He is good, and His mercy endureth forever. Alleluia! This is the day the Lord has made, Alleluia! Let us rejoice in it, Alleluia! Our paschal lamb is Christ who sacrified Himself for us, Alleluia!"

GOSPEL. (*Mark.* xvi. 1—7.) AT THAT TIME: Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of James and Salome, bought sweet spices, that coming they might anoint Jesus. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came to the sepulchre, the sun being now risen. And they said one to another: Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And looking, they saw the stone rolled back. For it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side clothed with a white robe: and they were astonished. Who saith to them:

Be not affrighted: you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified: he is risen, he is not here, behold the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter, that he goeth before you, into Gálilee: there you shall see him, as he told you.

Why did the holy women intend to anoint the body of Jesus with spices?

Because it was the custom of the Jews to anoint the bodies of the dead, and as the Sabbath was so near and the time so short that they could not do it before the burial, these pious women procured the spices, and immediately after the Sabbath was ended, they hurried, in the early morning, to the sepulchre, to perform this service of love for Jesus. We are taught by their conduct,

that true love is never indifferent or slow, and that it does without hesitation whatever it can that is agreeable to God.

Why did the angel send the women to the disciples, and especially to Peter?

Because the disciples were the ones who were to announce the resurrection of Christ to the whole world, and they were now, because of His death, much saddened and disturbed. Peter was the head of the apostles, and on account of having three times denied our Lord, he was greatly dejected and faint of heart, and was, therefore, above all to be comforted.

What encouragement has the resurrection of Christ for us?

It encourages us to rise spiritually with Him, and live henceforth a new life (*Rom.* vi. 4.), which we do if we not only renounce sin, but also fly from all its occasions, lay aside our bad habits, subdue our corrupt inclinations, and aim after virtue and heavenly things.

ASPIRATION. I rejoice, O my Jesus, that Thou hast victoriously risen from death. Grant us by the triumph Thou hast obtained over death, hell, and the devil, the grace to subdue our evil inclinations, walk in a new life, and die no more in sin. Amen.

MORAL LESSON.

IT is certainly true, that Christ by His death on the cross and by His resurrection, has rendered perfect satisfaction, and effected man's redemption (*Hebr.* ix. 12.); but we must be careful not to fancy, that there is now no farther need of our doing penance, or of working and fighting for our own salvation. For, as the children of Israel, though freed from Pharao's bondage, had to gain the Promised Land, and had to fight long and against many enemies, so also must we, though freed by Christ from the devil's servitude, still fight to the end of our lives, for the promised heavenly land, with God's grace, against our enemies: the world, the flesh, and the devil. For no one is crowned, unless he has properly fought. (ii. *Tim.* ii. 5.) We must partake of the redemption and satisfaction of Christ, and apply it to ourselves, by the constant imitation of Christ and His virtues, by diligent use of the means of grace obtained by Him and offered to us, by patiently bearing all our trials and sufferings, and by a penitent life: as the pious Angelus Silesius very appropriately writes:

"God is a lamb, that avails you not, my Christian,
If you become not also a lamb of God.
The cross on Golgatha redeems not from evil,
If it is not also erected in thee;
The dear Christ's death aids you not, my Christian,
Until in Him and for Him you also have died."

INSTRUCTION FOR EASTER MONDAY.

N the Introit of this day's Mass, the Church compares the opening of the entrance into heaven which has been effected by the death and resurrection of Christ, to the entrance of the chosen people of Israel into the Promised Land, which was effected by Josua, and says: The Lord hath brought you into a land flowing with milk and honey. Alleluia: let then the law of the Lord be ever in your mouth, Alleluia, Alleluia. (*Exod.* xiii.) Praise the Lord, and call upon his name: publish his works among the Gentiles. (*Ps.* civ.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who by the mystery of the paschal solemnity, has bestowed remedies on the world; continue, we beseech Thee, Thy heavenly blessings on Thy people, that they may deserve to obtain perfect liberty, and advance towards eternal life. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Acts* x. 37—43.) In those days: Peter standing up in the midst of the people said: You know the word that hath been published through all Judea: for it began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached, Jesus of Nazareth: how God anointed him with the Holy Ghost, and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things that he did in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed hanging him upon a tree. Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest. Not to all the people, but to witnesses preordained by God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose again from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is he who was appointed by God to be judge of the living and of the dead. To him all the prophets give testimony, that through his name all receive remission of sins, who believe in him.

INSTRUCTION. St. Peter concludes his sermon on the resurrection with the declaration, that all who believe in Christ, will by Him receive forgiveness of their sins. For this a faith actuated by love is necessary, which will manifest itself in the exercise of good works; and that which is believed, must be

wrought into action. Endeavor to have this faith to which alone is promised forgiveness of sin and eternal happiness.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xxiv. 13—35.) At that time: Two of the disciples of Jesus went the same day to a town which was sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, named Emmaus. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that while they talked and reasoned with themselves, Jesus himself also drawing near, went with them. But their eyes were held that they should not know him. And he said to them: What are these discourses that you hold one with another as you walk, and are sad? And

the one of them whose name was Cleophas, answering, said to him: Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that have been done there in these days? To whom he said: What things? And they said: Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet, mighty in work and word before God and all the people. And how our chief priests and princes delivered him to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we hoped that it was he that should have redeemed Israel: and now besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done. Yea and certain women also of our company, affrighted us, who before it was light, were at the sepulchre. And not finding his body, came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, who say that he is alive. And some of our people went to the sepulchre: and found it so as the women had said, but him they found not. Then he said to them: O foolish, and slow of heart to believe in all things which the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the scriptures the things that were concerning him. And they drew nigh to the town whither they were going: and he made as though he would go farther. But they constrained him, saying: Stay with us, because it is towards evening, and the day is now far spent. And he went in with them. And it came to pass, whilst he was at table with them, he took bread; and blessed and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him: and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to the other: Was not our heart burning within us, whilst he spoke in the way, and opened to us the scriptures? And rising up the same hour they went back to Jerusalem: and they found the eleven gathered together, and those that were with them. Saying, the Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way: and how they knew him in the breaking of bread.

Why did Christ appear as a stranger to these two disciples?

Christ conformed Himself to their state of mind; for these disciples yet doubted Christ, and, as it appears, did not believe, that He was also God, although He had so often declared, that He was, and proved it beyond contradiction; they regarded Him as a prophet and doubted in His resurrection. They looked at Him up to this time only with their outward eyes, not with the eyes of their heart, that is, with faith in His divinity, and therefore the Saviour only exhibited Himself externally, and did not reveal Himself to their soul. It is thus, that God generally proceeds towards us. He suits His graces to our disposition; as our faith, hope, love, and fidelity are to Him, so is the knowledge of Him, the reception of His graces, and their advantage to us.

Then Christ did not suffer voluntarily, but by compulsion, since He says: Ought not Christ to have suffered?

Christ voluntarily gave Himself up to death, as said by Isaias (liii. 7.); but though He voluntarily gave Himself up to death, He was obliged to suffer, that the decree of His Father, and the prophecies of the prophets might be fulfilled; that our redemption which required the price of His death upon the cross, might be effected; and that we might learn from His example, that by suffering we enter heaven.

How did Christ expound the Scriptures to these disciples?

It is probable, that He showed them how His passion and death were foretold in various ways and prefigured, as for instance, how He was sold in the innocent Joseph; His scourging prototyped in Joseph's bloody coat; His crowning with thorns by the ram which was hung by the horns among thorns; how He carried His cross to Mount Calvary in Isaac, loaded with the wood on which He was to be sacrificed; deprived of His clothes and derided in His nakedness, as Noah by his children; how His crucifixion was prefigured by the serpent Moses set up in the wilderness; how the animals prepared for sacrifice in the Old Testament, and especially the paschal lamb, were types of Him, who, like them, was killed and sacrificed without His bones being broken, on the cross; and, finally, how Jonas who was three days in the whale and then came forth again, imaged Christ's death and burial. He showed them, also, how clearly David and Isaias foretold and described His passion.

Why did Jesus appear to be going farther?

To give them occasion to show their love for Him, a stranger, whom they did not as yet regard as God; and also to give them opportunity to do a work of charity, for it is pleasing to God for us to hospitably invite and entertain strangers. Thus did Abraham and Lot entertain angels in the form of strangers, and saints in the New Testament Christ Himself.

How did the disciples recognize Him in the breaking of bread?

Because, as the holy fathers believe, He gave them then His sacred body as He had to the apostles at the Last Supper, as these disciples had probably heard described.

What else have we especially to learn in this gospel?

That when we have received Christ at Easter, in the Blessed Sacrament, we should beg Him to stay with us for that the evening of our life is drawing nearer and nearer.

PETITION. Remain with us, Lord Jesus, by virtue and through the effects of Thy Blessed Sacrament; for behold, the evening of our life, death, is drawing nearer and nearer, that we, who, like the disciples going to Emmaus, are in need of constancy and understanding, may have our faith strengthened by Thy most holy body, become fixed in hope, and so united in love with Thee that nothing can ever again separate us from Thee. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE TUESDAY AFTER EASTER.

He Church continues to praise and thank God for the redemption, and sings at the Introit: He hath given them the water of wisdom to drink, Alleluia: this wisdom shall be strengthened in them, and shall not be moved, Alleluia: it shall raise them up for ever, Alleluia, Alleluia. (*Eccl.* xv. 3.) Praise the Lord, and call upon his name: declare his deeds among the Gentiles. (*Ps.* civ.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who by a new increase doest continually enlarge Thy Church: grant that Thy servants may manifest in their lives the sacrament they have received with faith. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Acts* xiii. 26—33.) In those days: Paul standing up, and with his hand bespeaking silence, said: My brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you fear God, to you the word of this salvation is sent. For they that inhabited Jerusalem, and the rulers thereof, not knowing him, nor the voices of the prophets

which are read every Sabbath, judging him have fulfilled them, and finding no cause of death in him, they desired of Pilate, that they might kill him. And when they had fulfilled all things that were written of him, taking him down from the tree, they laid him in a sepulchre. But God raised him up from the dead the third day: who was seen for many days by them who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who to this present are his witnesses to the people. And we declare unto you that the promise which was made to our fathers, this same God hath fulfilled to our children, raising up Jesus Christ our Lord.

Why do the apostles speak in nearly all their sermons, of the resurrection?

Because Christ's resurrection is the foundation of our faith and the anchor of our hope; for, as St. Paul says elsewhere: If Christ be not risen again, your faith is vain, for you are yet in your sins. (i. *Cor.* xv. 17.) Why? Because Christ is, then, not the Son of God, and our faith is therefore but human; because without the resurrection, Christ would not have perfectly conquered death, and therefore sin, which is the cause of death, would not have been taken away by Him; because but for the resurrection we could not look for the glorious treasures, that is, the justification and resurrection for eternal life, which we lost by sin. Christ, therefore, permitted His apostles and disciples to doubt His resurrection until, by His frequent appearance among them, they could with their own eyes become convinced of it, and there would thus be no appearance of their having been over credulous, suffering themselves to be deceived.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xxiv. 36—47.) At that time: Jesus stood in the midst of his disciples, and said to them: Peace be to you; it is I, fear not. But they being troubled and frighted, supposed they saw a spirit. And he said to them: Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me to have. And when he had said this, he shewed them his hands and his feet. But while they yet believed not and wondered for joy, he said: Have you here anything to eat? And they offered him a piece of broiled fish, and a honey comb. And when he had eaten before them, taking the remains he gave to them. And he said to them: These are the

words which I have spoken to you whilst I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then he opened their understandings that they might understand the scriptures. And he said to them: Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day: and that penance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all nations.

Why did Christ wish peace to His apostles?

Because peace is one of the greatest of blessings; for where peace is, there is God, who, as St. Paul says, is a God of peace. Peace is a special mark of the children of God, while the sinners, on the contrary, know no peace.

Why did Christ show the signs of His wounds to the apostles?

To remove from them all doubt of His resurrection, and to strengthen their faith in Him. Therefore He permitted them to touch Him, eat with them, and similar things.—Let us learn from this how our resurrection from death must be attended; for the bodily resurrection of Christ must be the model of our spiritual resurrection. Like Christ we must show signs of our spiritual life, by living deeds, which will be done by loving God and our neighbor, by hatred and avoidance of sin, and occasions of evil, by suppressing bad habits, and by the exercise of good works.

Why did Christ retain the Five Wounds even after His resurrection?

To show that He had after His resurrection the same body which in His passion received the Five Wounds; to manifest His exceedingly great love for us, by which He has, so to speak, written us on His hands and feet, and in His heart. (*Is.* xlix. 16.) To move us to return love to Him; to encourage us to hope and trust in Him, because on account of those wounds we can have all hope, as they are the most powerful intercessors with the Heavenly Father; to strengthen us by these wounds in our contest with the world, the flesh, and the devil; to console the oppressed, distressed, and tempted, and to prepare them a place of refuge in their afflictions and temptations; to terrify impenitent sinners to whom He will one day exhibit these wounds, showing how much He has suffered for them in which they, by their own fault, have not participated.—Let us strive, therefore, to live so piously that these wounds may be our consolation, and not our terror.

ASPIRATION. Grant, o most bountiful Jesus, that the most precious blood which flowed from Thy wounds, may not be lost for me.

DOCTRINAL INSTRUCTION CONCERNING THE SCRIPTURES, TRADITION, AND THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH.

What are the holy Scriptures or the Bible?

IT is a collection of books, containing much that has been revealed by God to man at different times since the beginning of the world, and has been written down by various holy writers, not according to human will or understanding, but by inspiration of the Holy Ghost. It consists of two parts, of which the first is called the Old, and the second part the New Testament. The Old Testament contains the writings that were written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost before the coming of Christ, the New Testament that which was written after the coming of Christ.

Does the holy Bible contain the whole word of God?

By no means; for in the first place the Scriptures themselves say, that several books are lost, as, for example, the Book of the Battles of the Lord (*Num.* xxi. 14.), the Book of the Just (*Jos.* x. 13.), the Prophecies of several Prophets (ii. *Paral.* xxxiii. 19.), one Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians. (i. *Cor.* v. 9.) With these books were certainly lost revealed truths not contained in the other books. Therefore according to the testimony of the Bible itself, the whole word of God is not contained in it. Texts from the New Testament also testify to this. Thus, after he had given the necessary directions concerning the celebration of the holy Eucharist, St. Paul says (i. *Cor.* xi. 34.), that he would arrange the rest when he would be at Corinth, but his orders are nowhere written. In several texts of his Epistles to the Thessalonians (ii. *Thess.* ii. 14.), and to Timothy (i. *Tim.* vi. 20., ii. *Tim.* i. 13.), he speaks of traditions and of speeches which he made, wholesome words which he preached, which also are not found written down; and finally, he writes to Timothy these memorable words: And the things which thou hast heard from me before many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also (ii. *Tim.* ii. 2.); but where these entrusted teachings are written, is not known. St. John writes at the end of his gospel, that he had not written down all that Jesus did; and St. Luke says (*Acts* i. 3.), that after His resurrection Jesus spoke to His apostles concerning the kingdom of heaven, but what He said, the saint does not write. The important instructions which Christ, after His resurrection, gave to His apostles are entirely lacking. How, then, can the holy Scriptures contain the whole word of God? The apostles had neither the idea, nor the intention of producing a complete collection of the doctrines of Christ; Jesus did not command them to write, but to preach, and the gospel had been announced and brought forth glorious fruits in three parts of the world, before a word of it had ever been written.

(*Rom.* x.) The writings of the New Testament owe their existence to heresies which sprung up, or to doubts which arose, or to other external circumstances, and are therefore only occasional writings, but not a complete collection of the entire teachings of Christ, as the Scriptures, as we have seen, themselves acknowledge.

Where are the doctrines of Christ which are not contained in Scripture, to be found?

They are to be found in hereditary teachings, that is, in oral traditions containing that which Jesus taught, or the apostles, inspired by the Holy Ghost, preached, did not write, but entrusted by word of mouth to their successors, as we see from St. Paul's words: What you have heard from me before many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also, and the same thing is clear from the testimony of the earliest fathers of the Church. Thus St. Ignatius († A. D. 107) enjoins to the faithful the keeping of the apostolic traditions; St. Clement († A. D. 101), assistant of St. Paul, relates that he was often entreated by the brethren to write down that which he had heard from the priests who succeeded the apostles; St. Basil states: "The doctrines of faith taught in the Church have come to us partly from the writings of the apostles, partly from the sacredness of oral tradition; they are equally important, and every one is subject to them;" and St. Chrysostom says: "The apostles did not write all; they have left us much by tradition, which deserves the same faith as their writings." (*in* ii. *Thess. c.* 2.) The Church, therefore, justly appeals to tradition as to the Bible, in reference to her dogmas and moral teachings, and she must appeal to it, because Christ commissioned her to teach all nations all whatsoever He had commanded, and has said that heaven and earth shall pass away, but His word shall not pas away. (*Matt.* xxiv. 35., xxviii. 20.) But since the Scriptures do not contain all the words, the entire doctrine of Christ, how could the Church fulfil her commission if that which is missing in the Scriptures, was not confided to her by tradition? When the Protestants throw away tradition, and allow only the Bible for their rule of faith, they are decidedly in error, even contradict themselves, for they observe various regulations made by the apostles, whichare not in the Bible. Thus they with the Catholics, observe the first day of the week, Sunday; baptize infants, teach that the Sacrament of Baptism cannot be repeated, eat from the blood, &c., of which nothing is said for or against in the Bible; whence then do they learn that this is allowable? From nowhere else than from the tradition of the Catholic Church, and yet they reject tradition! How well founded and in accordance with truth is, on the contrary, the teaching of the Catholic Church!

Is the Bible or tradition the greater authority in the Catholic Church?

They have equal authority in the Catholic Church, for each contains the word of God, as the Council of Trent declares in these words: "All books, of the Old as well as of the New Testament, because God is the sole author of each, as also the traditions in regard to dogma and moral teachings which are either taught orally by Christ Himself, or are inspired by the Holy Ghost, and have been preserved in the Catholic Church, the holy Synod accepts and reveres with equal honor and reverence .... but whosoever does not accept these books, or does voluntarily despise these traditions, let him be anathema." (*Sess.* iv. *de script. can.*)

Does not tradition, as the Church's adversaries assert, contain human teachings invented by the pope?

This assertion is a calumny; for only that which the apostles heard from Jesus, or received by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and did not write down, but passed by word of mouth to their successors, is tradition, and only this does the Church receive as such, according to the rule: "That which always, everywhere, and by all true Catholics has been believed, is true tradition."

Is not the Bible so clear, that any one can understand it?

No; for then it would not have been necessary for Christ to explain the Scriptures to His disciples, as this day's gospel states that He did, and it follows from this, that it is not every one who of his own judgment can understand and explain the Bible. That the Bible is not so plainly written that any one can understand it, is asserted, for instance, by St. Peter of St. Paul's epistles (ii. *Petr.* iii. 16.) when writing to the Christians of Asia Minor: Understanding this first, that no prophecy of the Scriptures is made by private interpretation; and the eunuch of Queen Candace answered to the Apostle Philip's question, if he understood what he was reading in the Scriptures: How can I, unless some one show me? (*Acts* viii. 31.) If the Bible was intelligible to all, there would not be so many quarrels about matters of faith, and such innumerable sects among the heretics, who all appeal to the Bible, and with the Bible in their hands condemn and calumniate each other. The holy Bible inspired by the Holy Ghost, can only be understood and explained by the Holy Ghost Himself, or with His assistance by those to whom He is promised and given for this purpose. But it is not every one to whom the Holy Ghost is promised for the understanding and explaining of the Bible, as St. Paul testifies (i. *Cor.* xii. 8.); and not every one is able to read the Scriptures in their original language, and to discern whether the translations are correct or false, whether they are truly by the authors claimed for them, and if they really contain the word of God or not, &c. From this it is evident,

that God who wishes that all men should come to the knowledge of truth and be saved (i. *Tim.* ii. 4.), in things that belong to faith and morals, has appointed another basis besides the Scriptures on which all who aim after true knowledge, can securely build.

What is this basis?

It is the infallible ministry of the Catholic Church, consisting of the pope, the successor of St. Peter and visible head of the Church, and of the bishops and priests, the successors of the apostles, which, relying upon the pure, apostolic traditions, and with the assistance of Christ and of His Holy Spirit which He has promised to that ministry, is to decide upon and expound the true meaning of Scripture in matters of faith and morals. This holy ministry cannot err, for Jesus will be always with it, and His Holy Spirit remains with it to the end of the world. (*Matt.* xxviii. 19, 20.; *John* xiv. 16, 26.; xvi. 13.) To this ministry all the fathers refer as to the true and only guide of faith. Therefore all who do not wish to be driven about with every wind of doctrine by the wickedness of men, by cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive (*Eph.* iv. 14.), must obey this ministry which cannot be deceived; all who wish to enter the true fold of Jesus, His Church, or if belonging to it already, wish to rest secure from all error, must obey this ministry, for it is the pillar and ground of truth (i. *Tim.* iii. 15.); and that no one might look upon the word of God heard from these lawful ministers, as upon human teachings, but receive it as Christ's, the Redeemer gave it such authority that He said: Who heareth you, heareth me; who despiseth you, despiseth me. (*Catech. Rom. in praef. Luke* x. 16.)

How, therefore, should the Catholic answer the objections which are frequently made by unbelievers against the holy Mass, the veneration of the saints, purgatory, &c.?

He should answer: "I believe these and similar matters, because God has revealed them, and that He has revealed them, I believe, because it is proposed to be believed by the teacher, the Church, which is the pillar and ground of truth, governed by Jesus and His Holy Spirit, and therefore cannot err."

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER, called DOMINICA IN ALBIS.

Why is this Sunday called Dominica in Albis or Sunday in white?

BEcause on this day the neophytes laid aside the white dress which, as emblem of their innocence, they received on Holy

Saturday, and put on their necks an Agnus Dei, or Lamb of God, made of white wax, and blessed by the pope, to remind them always of the innocence they were given, and of the meekness of the Lamb Jesus. For which reason the Church sings at the Introit: As new born babes, Alleluia, desire the rational milk without guile, Alleluia, Alleluia. (i. *Petr.* ii. 2.) Rejoice to God our helper: sing aloud to the God of Jacob. (*Ps.* lxxx.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, O Almighty God, that we, who have celebrated the solemnity of Easter, may, by the assistance of Thy divine grace, ever make the effects thereof manifest in our lives and actions. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (i. *John* v. 4—10.) Dearly beloved: Whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world: and this is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This is he that came by water and blood Jesus Christ: not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the spirit which testifieth, that Christ is the truth. And there are three who give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. And these three are one. And there are three that give testimony on earth: the spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three are one. If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. For this is the testimony of God which is greater, because he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth in the Son of God, hath the testimony of God in himself.

INSTRUCTION. As in his gospel, so in his epistles, and especially in this, St. John proves the divinity of Christ which had been denied by some heretics. He says that Christ had come to purify all men from sin by water and blood, that is, by His blood shed on the cross for our reconciliation, and by the water of baptism to which He has given the power, the divine effect of His blood, and has thus proved Himself the divine Redeemer. This His divine dignity is attested by the Holy Ghost who lived in Christ and worked through Him with His fulness, and when sent by Him after our Lord's death, produced most wonderful effect in the apostles and the faithful. As now on earth three, the Spirit, water, and blood, give testimony of Christ's divinity and agree in it, so also in heaven three, the Father, who calls Him His beloved Son (*Matt.* iii. 17.), the Word, or the Son Himself, who wrought so many miracles, the Holy Ghost, when He descended

upon Him at the baptism in the Jordan (*Luke* iii. 22.), give testimony of His divinity, and these also agree with one another in their testimony. If Christ is truly God, then we must believe in Him, and this faith must be a living one, that is, it must prove fertile in living good works, and this faith conquers the world by teaching us to love God above all, to despise the world with its pleasures, and to overcome it by indifference to it. Let us strive to have such faith, and we shall overcome all temptations and gain the eternal crown.

ASPIRATION. O Lord Jesus! strengthen me by a lively faith in Thy divinity, so that I may not succumb in the spiritual combat against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and be thus eternally lost.

GOSPEL. (*John* xx. 19—31.) At that time: When it was late that same day, being the first day of the week, and the doors were shut, where the disciples were gathered together for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them: Peace be to you. And when he had said this, he shewed them his hands and his side. The disciples therefore were glad when they saw the Lord. He said therefore to them again: Peace be to you. As the Father hath sent me, I also send you. When he had said this, he breathed on them; and he said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained. Now Thomas, one of the twelve, who is called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him: We have seen the Lord. But he said to them: Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hands into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days, again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said: Peace be to you. Then he said to Thomas: Put in thy fingers hither, and see my hands, and bring hither thy hand, and put it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing. Thomas answered, and said to him: My Lord and my God! Jesus saith to him: Because thou hast seen me, Thomas, thou hast be-

lieved: blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed.*) Many other signs also did Jesus in the sight of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: and that believing you may have life in his name.

Why does Christ so often wish peace to the apostles?

To show that He only, by His death and resurrection, has made peace between God and man, and that His own should be known by their harmony. (*John* xiii. 35.) There is a threefold peace: peace with God, with ourselves, and with our fellowmen. Christ has obtained us the peace with God, and we preserve it

*) What follows, is omitted on the Feast of St. Thomas, 21st of December.

by not offending God, or, if we have sinned, by at once becoming reconciled to Him by penance. A good conscience gives us peace with ourselves, and love which bears all and forgives every offence, peace with our fellowmen. This threefold love is necessary for our salvation.

Why did Jesus breathe upon the apostles when giving them the power to forgive sin?

To show that, as bodily life was once given to Adam by the breath of God, so should the spiritual life, the sanctifying grace, be henceforth given by the apostles and their successors through the Holy Ghost in the Sacrament of Penance, to the children of Adam who had, as it were, died of sin.

Why did God permit, that Thomas should not believe in Christ's resurrection?

That Thomas as well as we, as St. Gregory says, should be strengthened in the humble belief in the resurrection of Christ, and that all doubts should be removed.

Had Thomas true faith when with his own eyes he saw Christ?

Yes, for he saw Christ only in His humanity, and yet testified to His divinity by exclaiming: My Lord and my God!

Is it true, meritorious faith to be not ready to believe before seeing that which is to be believed?

By no means; for faith exists precisely in this: to firmly hold as true that which is not seen. Therefore Christ calls him blessed who has not seen and yet believes.

When is faith true and meritorious?

That is true faith which holds as immovably sure all that God has revealed, whether written or unwritten, and when life is in accordance with faith; for faith in Jesus simply does not save us, when that which He has commanded, is not performed. (*Matt.* vii. 21.; *James* ii. 19.) That faith is meritorious which without doubting and without hesitation willingly submits the understanding to revealed truths which it cannot comprehend, and this for the love of God, who is eternal truth and cannot deceive.

Whence do we know for certain, that God has revealed certain things?

From the Church of Christ which alone preserves the revealed word of God, faithfully and uncorrupted, as it is contained in the Bible and in tradition; which is introduced by the Holy Ghost to all truth, and is governed by Christ who remains with her until the end of the world. (*Matt.* xviii. 20.)

Can we not attain to the possession of revealed truth or to true faith by searching the Scriptures, or reading the Bible?

No; for Christ wrote nothing, nor did He commission His disciples to write; He nowhere commanded us to search the Scrip-

tures for faith in His doctrine, but rather to hear His apostles and their successors (*Luke* x. 16.); according to St. Paul (*Rom.* x. 17.) true faith comes not by reading, but by hearing; the apostles did not anywhere institute writers, but everywhere teachers of the word of God (*Eph.* iv. 11.; i. *Cor.* xii. 28.); and not every man, as St. Paul says, has the gift of explaining (i. *Cor.* xii. 8—10.); not all men can read, and even if they can read, they have not the necessary knowledge for searching and understanding the Scriptures, and so all those who could not read, would be excluded from the knowledge of truth and from salvation; it is not every one who can tell if the Bible which he is reading, is genuine or corrupted, for lies can be written and printed; all who search the Scriptures do not come to one and the same true faith, and, according to the apostle, there can be but one faith; but by the free searching of the Bible, there have risen and are arising among the heretics thousands of sects, all claiming to find their faith in the Bible; the true doctrine of Jesus and faith in it, is always, as in the times of the apostles, propagated by oral teaching and preaching, not by reading and distributing the Bible; Christ did not say: Whosoever reads not the Bible, but: whosoever hears not the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican. (*Matt.* xviii. 17.) We, therefore, can find true faith only through the Church in which (as shown elsewhere) Christ has instituted an infallible ministry, and commanded all men to hear it.

Which is the true Church of Jesus?

That one only which bears all the marks of His true Church.

What are these marks?

According to the universal profession of faith, the true Church must be one, holy, apostolic, and catholic or universal.

In what must she be one?

In doctrine, in this that in all places the same doctrines of faith and morals are preached, and in all nations the same articles of faith held; in the Sacraments, in their number as well as in their constitution; in her head, as well in the invisible, Christ, our Lord, as in the visible head, the lawful successor of St. Peter in the Roman chair. (*Matt.* xvi. 18.; *Eph.* iv. 3—7.)

In what is she holy?

In Christ, her Head; in her divine constitution and organisation; in her doctrine and in the proper use of the Sacraments, which lead to sanctity; in her members who receive the grace of sanctity, the grace of baptism, and the forgiveness of sin, and who put on Christ; and in the proper celebration of the holy Sacrifice which shall be offered over the whole earth. (*Eph.* v. 26.; *Mal.* i. 11.)

In what is she apostolic?

In her doctrine which must come from Christ and the apostles, and agree with theirs in all times, and her ministers who by a valid ordination must follow in an unbroken succession from the apostles. (*Eph.* ii. 20.; *Acts* xiv. 22.; *Hebr.* v. 4.)

In what is she catholic or universal?

In this that she must live and be announced to the whole world (*John* x. 16.); must have existed uninterruptedly from the times of the apostles; all men must belong to her who wish to be saved (*Matt.* xxviii. 19—20.); and she must in all times and in all places teach all that Christ commanded His apostles to believe, to preach, and to perform. (*Matt.* xxviii.)

Which is this true Church?

The Roman Catholic Church, for she alone has these marks. She is one in her head, the Pope of Rome, in her doctrine, and in her Sacraments, which is especially manifested in this, that she excludes all those who do not accept without exception her dogmas. She is holy, for holy is her founder Christ; and her doctrines and Sacraments lead to sanctity as shown by the multitude of her saints whose sanctity God affirms by great miracles; no sect has saints. She is apostolic, for she accepts no doctrine which does not come from the apostles, and she can prove, that the ministers of the Church, the bishops, have come down in unbroken succession. She is catholic or universal, for she has been in existence always from the times of the apostles, as is clearly shown by this, that from the times of the apostles there have always been some who separated from her and founded sects; the stem must exist before the branches which grow from it, and the Catholic Church must therefore have always existed, and cannot have perished or become corrupt, since Christ has promised to remain with her to the end of the world; she is also spread over the whole world, is always being announced to all nations, and is fitted for all generations and for all peoples.

Can those who remain outside the Catholic Church, be saved?

The Council of Trent (*Sess. V. in the Introduction*) assigns the Catholic faith as the one without which it is impossible to please God, and the Roman Catechism teaches (*part. art.* 9.): "The Church is also called Catholic, because all who wish to be saved, must belong to her, as at the time of the deluge all perished who were outside the ark." According to this doctrine of the Church, which the holy fathers affirm, only those idolaters and obstinate heretics who knowingly deny the truth and despise it, and will not enter the Church, are excluded from salvation. The Catholic Church does not condemn the unbelievers, she prays for them, leaves judgment to the Lord, who alone knows the heart, and knows whether the error is culpable or not, and she calls on all her members to pray for their enlightenment.

Are we then already saved, if we belong to the true Church?

No, we must also live up to the faith she teaches, make diligent use of all means of salvation, and regard and honor all her regulations and commands, for otherwise it will come true of us, as said by Christ: And I say unto you, that many shall come from the East and the West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom (the true Church) shall be cast out into exterior darkness. (*Matt.* viii. 11.)

INSTRUCTION FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Ecause of the joyous resurrection of Christ, and the graces flowing to us on account of it, the Church sings at the Introit of Mass: The earth is full of the mercy of the Lord, Alleluia, by the word of the Lord the heavens were established, Alleluia, Alleluia. Rejoice in the Lord O ye just: praise becometh the upright. (*Ps.* xxxii.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who, by the humiliation of Thy Son, hast raised up the fallen world: grant to Thy people perpetual joy: that They whom thou hast delivered from the danger of everlasting death, may arrive at eternal happiness. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (i. *Peter* ii. 21—25.) Dearly beloved: Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example that you should follow his steps. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. Who when he was reviled, did not revile: when he suffered, he threatened not: but delivered himself to him that judged him unjustly: who his own self bore our sins in his body upon the tree: that we being dead to sins, should live to justice: by whose stripes you were healed. For you were as sheep going astray: but you are now converted to the shepherd and bishop of your souls.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul teaches the Christians patience in misery and afflictions, even in unjust persecution, and for this purpose places before them the example of Christ who though most innocent, suffered most terribly and so patiently. Are we true sheep of the good shepherd if at the smallest cross, at every word, we become so angry and impatient?

ASPIRATION. O Lord Jesus! grant me the grace to follow Thee, my good Shepherd, and not to complain and make threats whenever I am reprimanded, reviled, or for justice's sake am persecuted.

GOSPEL. (*John* x. 11—16.) At that time: Jesus said to the Pharisees: I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. But the hireling and he that is not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming and leaveth the sheep, and flieth, and the wolf catcheth, and scattereth the sheep: and the hireling flieth, because he is a hireling; and he hath no care for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd: and I know mine, and mine know me, as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father: and I lay down my life for my sheep. And other sheep I have, that are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

In what way has Christ proved Himself a good shepherd?

In this that He sacrificed His life for those who did not yet love Him, and could not reward Him, even for His enemies (*John* iv. 30.; *Rom.* v. 8.), and has besides given Himself to them for their food.

How are we to know if we are among the sheep of Christ, that is, His chosen ones?

By this if we willingly listen to the voice of the shepherd in sermons and instructions, in spiritual books and conversations, are obedient to it, and especially give ear and follow the rules of the Church through which the good Shepherd speaks to us (*Luke* x. 16.), "for he," says St. Augustine, "who has not the Church for his mother, will not have God for his father;" if we gladly receive the food of the good Shepherd, that is, His sacred body and blood in holy Communion; if we are patient and meek as a lamb, freely forgiving our enemies; if we love all men from our heart, do only good to them, and seek to bring them to Jesus.

Who are the other sheep of Christ?

The gentiles who were not of the fold of Israel, whom Christ sought to bring by His disciples, and now by their successors, into His fold.—Among these sheep we also, through our ancestors, belonged. O how grateful we should be to God, that He has brought us into the fold of His Church, and how diligently we should conduct ourselves as good sheep!

When will there be but one fold and one shepherd?

When by the Church's prayers and by her missionaries all nations shall be converted to the only saving Church, constituting then one Church under one head. Let us pray that this may soon come to pass.

PRAYER. O Lord Jesus! Thou good Shepherd who on the cross didst give Thy life for Thy sheep, grant us, we beseech Thee, by Thy death, the grace to bear upon ourselves all the signs of Thy lambs, that we may be one day numbered among Thy chosen ones in heaven.

DOCTRINE OF HOPE.

I give my life for my sheep. (*John* x. 15.)

What has Christ won for us by His death?

THE remission of our sins, the grace to lead a godpleasing life, and eternal happiness, for which we now firmly hope, with secure confidence may now expect, and most assuredly will obtain, if we do not ourselves let it go.

In what does eternal happiness consist?

In the clear vision of God, which includes the most perfect love of Him, by which those who are saved, become, as it were, one with Him, possessing in this union everything that they could possibly desire.

What are the necessary means of obtaining eternal happiness?

The grace of God, that is, His continual assistance; the practice of the three divine virtues: faith, hope, and love; the keeping of God's commandments; the frequent use of the holy Sacraments, and constant prayer. These means must be diligently employed, for "God who," as St. Augustine says, "created us without us, will not save us without us," that is, without our cooperation.

What may especially enable us to hope for eternal happiness?

The infinite mercy and goodness of God, who from all eternity has loved us more than an earthly mother, and because of this love did not even spare His only begotten Son, but gave Him up, for our sake, to the bitterest death. Will He then deny us heaven, who in giving us His Son, has given us more than heaven itself? The fidelity of God: He has so often promised us eternal happiness, and in so many texts of Scripture so clearly explained, that He wishes us to be saved, that He must keep His promise, for He is eternal truth and cannot possible lie or deceive. (*Hebr.* vi. 18.) He says not yes to-day, and no to-morrow, there is no change in Him, nor shadow of alteration. (*James* i. 17.) The omnipotence of God, who can do all that He pleases, whom no one can oppose or prevent from doing what He will; if now we have confidence in a rich and honest man who assures us, he will assist us in need, how much more should we hope in the best, most faithful, and all powerful God!

When should we make acts of hope?

As soon as we come to the use of reason and are sufficiently instructed concerning this virtue and its motives; in time of trouble or of severe temptation against this virtue; when receiving the holy Sacraments; every day in the morning or evening, and especially at the hour of death.

The same things are to be observed in making acts of faith and of love.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

THE Church continues to encourage us in joy because of Christ's resurrection, and sings at the Introit of this day's Mass: Shout with joy to God all the earth, Al'eluia: Sing ye a psalm to his name, Alleluia. Give glory to his praise. Allel. Allel. Allel. (*Ps.* lxv.) Say unto God: How terrible are thy works, O Lord! Thy great power shall convict thy enemies of a lie. Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who shewest the light of Thy truth to such as go astray, that they may return to the way of righteousness: grant that all, who profess the Christian name, may forsake whatever is contrary to that profession, and closely pursue what is agreeable to it. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (i. *Peter* ii. 11—19.) DEARLY BELOVED: I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims to refrain yourselves from carnal desires, which war against the soul, having your conversation good among the Gentiles: that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may, by the good works which they shall behold in you, glorify God in the day of visitation. Be ye subject therefore to every human creature for God's sake: whether it be to kings as excelling: or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of the good: for so is the will of God, that by doing well you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not as making liberty a cloak for malice, but as the servants of God. Honor all men: love the brotherhood: fear God: honor the king. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thanks-worthy in Jesus Christ our Lord.

EXPLANATION. St. Peter here urges the Christians to regard themselves as strangers and pilgrims upon this earth, looking upon temporal goods only as borrowed things, to which they should not attach their hearts, for death will soon deprive them of all. He then admonishes them as Christians to live in a Christian manner, to edify and lead to truth the gentiles who

hated and calumniated them. This should be especially taken to heart by those Catholics who live among people of a different religion; for they can edify them by the faithful and diligent practice of their holy religion, and by a pure, moral life lead them to the truth; while by lukewarmness and an immoral life, they will only strengthen them in their error, and thus injure the Church. St. Peter also requires the Christians, because it is God's will (*Rom.* xiii. 1.), who has Himself instituted it, to obey the lawful authority, and, therefore, to pay all duties and taxes faithfully. Christ paid the customary tribute for Himself and Peter (*Matt.* xvii. 26.), and St. Paul expressly commands, that toll and taxes should be paid to whomsoever they are due. (*Rom.* xiii. 7.) St. Peter finally advises servants to obey their masters whether these are good or bad, and by so doing be agreeable to God who will one day reward them for it.

ASPIRATION. Grant me the grace, O Jesus! to consider myself, as long as I live, as a pilgrim and as such to use all temporal goods. Give me patience in adversities, and so strengthen me, that I may willingly obey the lawful authority, though its laws and regulations should come hard and its tribute press upon me.

GOSPEL. (*John* xvi. 16—22.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: A little while, and now you shall not see me: and again a little while, and you shall see me: because I go to the Father. Then some of his disciples said one to another: What is this that he saith to us: A little while, and you shall not see me: and again a little while, and you shall see me, and, because I go to the Father? They said therefore: What is this that he saith: A little while? we know not what he speaketh. And Jesus knew that they had a mind to ask him; and he said to them: Of this do you inquire among yourselves, because I said: A little while, and you shall not see me: and again a little while and you shall see me. Amen, amen, I say to you, that you shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice: and you shall be made sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labour, hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but when she hath brought forth the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. So also you now indeed have sorrow,

but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man shall take from you.

What is the meaning of Christ's word: A little while and you shall not see me; and again a little while and you shall see me?

St. Chrysostom applies these words, which Christ spoke to His apostles a few hours before His passion, to the time between the death of Jesus and His resurrection; but St. Augustine to the time between the resurrection and the ascension, and then to the Last Judgment at the end of the world, and he adds: "This little while seems long to us living, but ended, we feel how short it is." In affliction we should console ourselves by reflecting, how soon it will end, and that it cannot be compared with the future glory, that is ever awaiting in heaven him who patiently endures.

Why did our Saviour tell His disciples of their future joys and sufferings?

That they might the more easily bear the sufferings that were to come, because we can be prepared for sufferings we know are coming; because they knew that their sufferings were only slight and momentary in comparison with the everlasting joy which awaited them; like the pains of a woman in giving birth to a child, which are great indeed, but short, and soon forgotten by the mother in joy at the birth of the child. "Tell me," says St. Chrysostom, "if you were elected king but were obliged to spend the night preceding your entrance into your capital city, where you were to be crowned, with much discomfort in a stable, would you not joyfully endure it in the expectation of your kingdom? And why should not we in this valley of tears live willingly through adversities, in expectation of one day obtaining the kingdom of heaven?

PETITION. Enlighten me, O Holy Spirit! that I may realize that this present life and all its hardships are but slight and momentary, and strengthen me to patiently endure the adversities of life in the hope of future heavenly joys.

CONSOLATION IN TRIALS AND ADVERSITIES.

You shall weep and lament. (*John* xvi. 20.)

THat Christian is most foolish who fancies, that the happiness of this world consists in honors, wealth, and pleasures, while Christ, the eternal Truth, teaches the contrary, promising eternal happiness to the poor and oppressed, and announcing eternal affliction and lamenting to those rich ones who have their comfort in this world. How much, then, are those to be pitied who as Christians believe, and yet live as if these truths were not for them, and who think only how they can spend their days in luxury, hoping at the same time to go to heaven where all the saints, even Christ the Son of God Himself, have entered only by crosses and sufferings.

PRAYER IN TRIBULATION. O best Jesus! who hast revealed, that we can enter heaven only by many tribulations (*Acts* xiv. 21.), hast called them blessed who in this world are sad, oppressed, and persecuted, but patiently suffer, and will therefore be consoled and rejoiced, and who hast also taught us, that without the will of Thy Heavenly Father, not the slightest evil is done, not one hair of our head can be bent (*Luke* xxi. 13.): I firmly believe, that I shall become the more happy the more I am persecuted and oppressed, if I only patiently suffer. I therefore submit entirely to Thy

divine will, for I know that even though all hell, with its adherents, should rise against me, it could do me not the slightest injury without Thy permission.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

THE Introit of this day's Mass is a canticle of praise and thanks: Sing to the Lord a new canticle, Allel., because the Lord hath done wonderful things, Alleluia: he hath revealed his justice in the sight of the Gentiles, Allel. Allel. Allel. His right hand and his holy arm hath saved us. (*Ps.* xcvii.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who makest the faithful to be of one mind: grant that Thy people may love what Thou commandest, and desire what Thou promisest: that, amidst the uncertainties of this world, we may place our affections where there are true joys. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*James* i. 17—21.) DEARLY BELOVED: Every best gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no change, nor shadow of alteration. For of his own will hath he begotten us by the word of truth, that we might be some beginning of his creatures. You know, my dearest brethren. And let every man be swift to hear, but slow to speak, and slow to anger. For the anger of man worketh not the justice of God. Wherefore casting away all uncleanness, and abundance of naughtiness, with meekness receive the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

INSTRUCTION. Of all the gifts that come from God, the most excellent is, that, by the word of truth, the gospel, with His means of grace, especially by the regeneration in baptism, He has made us His children, thus raising us to be the first of all creatures, that is, to a dignity far above them. How great is this honor, and how earnestly we should strive to keep it! What makes this end easier than willingly to hear the word of truth, the gospel, when preached to us in sermons? The admonition of the apostle to be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger, contains true wisdom, for: In the multitude of words there shall not want sin, but he that refraineth his lips, is most wise (*Prov.* x. 19.); and God, therefore, gave us two ears

and but one tongue, that we might hear more than we speak, and not so easily become angry, which often comes from much speaking.

ASPIRATION. Aid me, O Lord, to preserve the dignity received in baptism, grant me a great love for Thy divine word, and strengthen me to subdue my tongue and to use it only for Thy glory.

GOSPEL. (*John* xvi. 5—14.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: I go to him that sent me, and none of you asketh me: Whither goest thou? But because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow hath filled your heart. But I tell you the truth: it is expedient to you that I go: for if I go

not, the Paraclete will not come to you: but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he is come, he will convince the world of sin, and of justice, and of judgment. Of sin: because they believed not in me. And of justice: because I go to the Father; and you shall see me no longer. And of judgment: because the prince of this world is already judged. I have yet many things to say to you: but you cannot bear them now. But when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will teach you all truth. For he shall not speak of himself; but what things soever he shall hear, he shall speak: and the things that are to come, he shall shew you. He shall glorify me: because he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it you.

INSTRUCTION. As the disciples in their grief at Christ's going to His passion and death, after the accomplishment of which He returned to His Father, never once asked Him: "Whither goest Thou?" so many Christians, because of their attachment to this world and its pleasures, never ask themselves: "Where am I going, whither leads my way? By my sinful life I am perhaps going towards hell, or will my little fervor for the right, my lukewarm prayers take me to heaven? Ask yourself in all earnestness, my Christian, whither leads the way you are going? Is it not the right path? then turn back and follow Jesus who only by the cross and suffering entered heaven.

Why could not the disciples receive the Holy Ghost until Christ had ascended into heaven?

Because they were attached to their Master, Christ, as children to their mother, with too sensual a love, and because Christ was first to return in His humanity to God, before God, the Holy Ghost, could abide in man in the fulness of grace. If therefore the human love of the apostles obstructed the reception of the Holy Ghost, how can the Holy Ghost dwell in men of carnal sense, inflamed with impure love?

How will the Holy Ghost convince the world of sin, of justice, and of judgment?

He will convince the world, that is, the Jews and gentiles, of sin, by showing them through the preaching, the sanctity and the miracles of the apostles as well as by gradual inward enlightenment, the grievous sins which they have committed by their infidelity and their vices; of justice, by unveiling their false justice, showing them that only Christ whom they unjustly rejected, is just and the fountain of justice; of judgment, by causing them to see themselves condemned in their prince and head, the

devil, whom they in their malice served, and who is now driven by the apostles in the name of Jesus from idols and from the bodies of men, and whose kingdom is destroyed.

Why did not Christ tell His apostles all He had to tell them?

Because they could not yet comprehend its sublimity; because they were still too weak, and too much attached to Jewish customs, and because they were also depressed; He therefore promised them the Holy Ghost, who would fit them for it by His enlightenment, and would teach all to them.

How does the Holy Ghost teach all truth?

By guiding the Church, that is, its infallible administration, by His light, to the knowledge of the truth necessary for the salvation of souls, preserving it from error; and by leading those members of the Church who seek His light and place no obstacle in its way, ever further on in the necessary knowledge of truth.

What is meant by: He shall not speak of himself, but what things soever he shall hear, he shall speak?

By this is meant, that the Holy Ghost will tell us only that which He has heard from all eternity from the Father and Son; His teaching will, therefore, perfectly agree with Christ's teachings, and not be contrary to them, for the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and Son and is equal God with them, and that which He teaches, is also their doctrine, which is expressed in the words: He shall receive of mine.

ASPIRATION. Ah, my Lord and my God! direct my feet in the way of Thy commandments and preserve my heart pure from sin, that Thy Holy Spirit may find nothing deserving reproach in me, that He may teach me all truth, and lead me to Thee, the eternal Truth, in heaven. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

N thanks for the redemption the Church sings at the Introit: With the voice of joy make this to be heard. Alleluia. Publish to the utmost bounds of the earth: that the Lord hath redeemed his people. Alleluia, Alleluia. (*Isai* xlviii. 20.) Shout with joy to God, all the earth: sing a psalm to his name: give glory to his praise. (*Ps.* lxv.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, from whom all that is good proceeds: grant that Thy people, by Thy inspiration, may resolve on what is right, and by Thy direction, put it in practice. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*James* i. 22—27.) DEARLY BELOVED: Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if a man be a hearer of the word and not a doer; he shall be compared to a man beholding his own countenance in a glass. For he beheld himself and went his way, and presently forgot what manner of man he was. But he that hath looked into the perfect law of liberty, and hath continued therein, not becoming a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work: this man shall be blessed in his deed. And if any man think himself religious, not bridling his tongue, but deceiving his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Religion clean and undefiled before God and the Father, is this: to visit the fatherless and the widows in their tribulation: and to keep one's self unspotted from the world.

EXPLANATION. True piety, as St. James here says, consists in fulfilling the divine will heard and recognized; in subduing the tongue, the most dangerous and injurious of all our members; in love and charity towards the poor and destitute, and in contempt of the world, against the false principles, foolish customs, and scandalous examples of which we should guard, that we may not become infected and polluted by them. Test thyself, whether thy life be of this kind.

ASPIRATION. O Jesus! Director of the soul! Give me the grace of true piety as St. James describes its practice.

GOSPEL. (*John* xvi. 23—30.) AT THAT TIME: Jesus said to his disciples: Amen, amen, I say to you: if you ask the Father any thing in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto you have not asked any thing in my name. Ask and you shall receive; that your joy may be full. These things I have spoken to you in proverbs. The hour cometh when I will no more speak to you in proverbs, but will shew you plainly of the Father. In that day you shall ask in my name: and I say not to you, that I will ask the Father for you. For the Father himself loveth you, because you have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from

the Father, and am come into the world: again I leave the world, and go to the Father. His disciples say to him: Behold, now thou speakest plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now we know that thou knowest all things, and thou needest not that any man should ask thee. By this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

Why does God wish us to make requests of Him?

That we may recognize and confess, that all good comes from Him; that we may acknowledge our poverty and weakness which in all things need the help of God; that we may thus glorify Him and render ourselves less unworthy of the gifts which He has promised us.

What is meant by asking in the name of Jesus?

By this is meant praying with confidence in the merits of Jesus, "who," as St. Cyril says, "being God with the Father, gives us the good, and as mediator carries our petitions to His Father." The Church therefore ends all her prayers with the words: "Through our Lord, Jesus Christ." It is also meant to pray for that which Christ Himself wishes to have given us, that is, whatsoever belongs to our soul's salvation; for to pray for temporal things merely in order to live happily in this world, is not pleasing to Christ and avails us nothing. "He who prays for what hinders salvation," says St. Augustine, "does not pray in the name of Jesus." Thus Jesus said to His disciples: Hitherto you have asked nothing in my name, "because," as St. Gregory says, "they did not ask for that which conduces to eternal salvation."

Why is it that sometimes God does not hear our prayers?

Because we often pray for things that are injurious, and like a good father, God denies them to us, in order to give us something better; because He wishes to prove our patience and perseverance in prayer; because we generally do not pray as we ought, for to be pleasing to God, prayer should be made when in a state of grace and with confidence in Christ's merits, for the prayer of a just man availeth much with God (*James* v. 16.); we must pray with humility and submission to the will of God, with attention, fervor, sincerity, and with perseverance.

When should we especially pray?

At morning, noon, and night, before and after meals, and as often as the clock strikes; for as God thinks every moment of us and overloads us with His grace, it is but right, that we should think often during the day of Him, with thanks for His blessings. We should also pray during the Church service, or if prevented from attending Church, at home; in time of severe temptation; at the reception of the holy Sacraments; when commencing any important undertaking, and at the hour of death.

How can we in accordance with Christ's teachings (*Luke* xviii. 1.), *pray at all time?*

By raising our hearts to God at different times during the day, for which purpose the aspirations, as they are called, are very useful, these are acts of faith, hope, love, humility, &c., which are aroused in our hearts; by short ejaculations as: "O Jesus! grant me to love Thee! Thee only do I desire to love! O be merciful to me! Lord, hasten to help me!" and by making the good intention, when commencing our work, to do all for the love of God, and according to His most holy will.

What is the signification of the different ceremonies Catholics use at their prayers?

The general signification is, that God must be served, honored, and adored, not only with the soul but with the body as well; when we pray aloud, we mean to praise God, not only with the mind but also with our lips; when we pray with bowed and uncovered head, with folded, uplifted, or outstretched hands, with bent knees, bowed and prostrate body, we shew our reverence and subjection to the majesty of God, before whom we who are but dust and ashes, cannot enough humble ourselves. These different ceremonies of prayer are frequently mentioned in both the Old and the New Testament, and Christ and His apostles used them, as for instance, the bending of the knees, falling on the face, &c.

What is the best prayer?

The "Our Father", which Christ Himself taught us, and commands us to repeat. It is, therefore, when said with devotion, the most powerful of prayers. (*Matt.* vi. *Luke* xi.)

SHORT EXPLANATION OF THE "OUR FATHER".

Of what does the Our Father consist?

IT consists of an address, as an introduction to the prayer, and of seven petitions in which is contained all that we should ask for the honor of God, and our own salvation. The address is this: "Our Father who art in heaven."

To what does the word "Father" encourage us?

To the love of God who has made us, by His Son, His children, and heirs of His kingdom; to thankfulness for the immeasurable grace of our creation, preservation, redemption, and sanctification; to confidence in the infinite goodness and mercy with which God, the best Father, watches over us; and to the firm resolution of remaining always the good children of this good Father.

What does the word "Our" signify?

That in the communion of saints we should pray for and with all the children of God; that we should be humble and preserve brotherly love towards all men.

Why, since God is everywhere present, is it said, "Who art in heaven?"

To remind us that we are not yet in our fatherland, and that our true home is heaven; to urge us to long with all desire for heaven, where our Father is, and where He has prepared us our inheritance.

For what do we ask in the first petition: "Hallowed be Thy name?"

That we and all men may truly know, love, and serve God; thus we ask: that all unbelievers may be converted to God, and

to the knowledge of truth; that all heresies and seducing arts may lose their power; that all vices may be uprooted, and all sinners brought to true penance, and the practice of virtue; that we ourselves may say, think, do nothing which is unbecoming in a child of God; and that all Christians may become more and more pious and saintly.

For what do we pray in the second petition: "Thy kingdom come?"

That the Church of God, the kingdom of Christ, may reach over the whole earth, and the kingdom of sin and the devil may be destroyed; that Christ may reign in our hearts and in the hearts of all; and that God may deign to receive us, having well ended our course on earth, into the kingdom of heaven.

For what do we ask in the third petition: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven?"

We ask for heavenly strength, that the will of God may be done by us as cheerfully and joyfully as it is by the angels and saints in heaven, and that we may humbly resign ourselves to it in all things, however hard it may be to do so. We connect with this petition the promise, that we will not only fulfil God's commandments, but that we will also accept and bear all that His holy providence may impose upon us or upon others.

In these three petitions we seek, as taught by Christ, first the kingdom of God, that all the rest may be added unto us. (*Luke* xii. 31.)

For what do we ask in the fourth petition: "Give us this day our daily bread?"

For all that we need for the well being of our spiritual and physical life, which is all comprised in the word "bread": as the necessary daily food, the word of God, the grace to do good, the body of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament; herein is included the prayer, that God would prevent lightning and hail, failure of crops, and other damages, but give, on the contrary, fruitful weather.

Why does it say, "this day" and "daily?"

The words "this day" signify, that we should put away all unnecessary cares, placing our confidence in God who will each day give us the day's necessary food; by the word "daily" we are taught to avoid all waste of food, and to eat only as much as is necessary; for he who wastes his food, eats not merely his daily bread, but the bread of many days.

What do we ask for in the fifth petition: "Forgive us our trespasses?"

We ask forgiveness, as poor sinners, for the debts which we daily make to God by our sins, promising in return not that our debtors, that is, those who have injured us, shall some day be forgiven, but that they are already forgiven; those who make this petition and yet live in enmity towards their neighbor, lie in the face of God, and will not receive forgiveness. (*Mark* xi. 25, 26.)

What is asked for in the sixth petition: "Lead us not into temptation?"

In this it is asked, that God will avert from us all temptations, either entirely or not abandon us in them, as we too often deserve, but strengthen us that we may not consent to temptations from the world, the flesh, and the devil; we cannot, indeed, be entirely free from them in this world, they are even necessary and useful for our salvation: for without temptation there is no combat, without combat no victory, and without victory no crown.

What do we ask for in the seventh petition: "Deliver us from evil?"

That God will deliver us from the only real evil, sin, and from the occasions of it, also from an unprovided death and from hell, and also that He may keep off temporal evils, such as war, famine, pestilence, &c.

INSTRUCTION CONCERNING THE PROCESSIONS ON ROGATION DAYS.

What are processions?

PRocessions are the solemn, public marching together of a number of persons, which in the Catholic Church are instituted according to the very earliest directions of the fathers, partly to encourage the piety of the faithful, partly in remembrance of graces received, in thanksgiving for them, or to obtain the divine assistance, and refer to the great mysteries of salvation. Those who take part in them with true piety, will reap salutary harvests of Christian virtue from them.

Are processions something new?

No, they were the custom in the very earliest centuries of the Church, as testified by the acts of the martyrs, of Cyprian, Lucius, Boniface, and the fathers of the Church, Basil, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Gregory, and others. They are also founded on Scripture. Thus King David caused the ark of the covenant to be carried in solemn procession to Jerusalem (ii. *Kings* vi.), and the same thing did Solomon, his son, when he placed the ark in the new temple. (iii. *Kings* viii.)

The ancients used to call the going out or going forth from Church procedere, "going away," hence the word procession, going out, marching about.

What do processions signify?

To the faithful they are a powerful incentive to fervor in prayer; when hundreds, even thousands of faithful praise God aloud, or cry to Him for help and mercy, must not even the coldest heart be roused to vivid, fervent devotion, since Christ has promised to be present even where two or three are assembled together in His name? Processions are a figure of the

pilgrim life of the Christian upon earth; we are strangers here below, and wanderers, our journey stretches from this valley of tears to the heavenly Sion; and the procession therefore at the end goes into the house of God; our journey leads over the thorny ways of life, and the procession therefore marches in the open air, where the pilgrim is exposed to all kinds of weather; processions are an open acknowledgment that to the Almighty God alone praise, thanks, and adoration are due, while they are a public profession of our faith in Christ, the Crucified; they are a solemn thanksgiving for being permitted to profess Christ, our Lord, before the whole world, as also for all the graces obtained through Him; they are a public testimonial of our faith in the one, holy, Catholic Church, whose members are united by the same bond of faith, and who form under their head, Christ, one family in God. Therefore the marching from one Church to the other, the bending of the banners in mutual salutation when parts of the processions meet each other. Finally, they are a sign of the triumph of Christian faith over the darkness of heathenism. If processions are solemnized with such intentions, with order and dignity, with fervent devotion in the light of faith, they are indeed, under the direction of a worthy priest, pleasing spectacles for angels and men, soon silencing the sneers and derision of faithless men.

Why are banners and the cross carried in processions?

The cross signifies, that we are assembled, as Christians, in the name of Jesus, who was crucified, in whose name we begin and end our prayers, through whose merits we expect all things from the Heavenly Father, and whom we must follow all through our journey to heaven; the red and white banners indicate, that we must walk in all innocence under the banner of Christ, and fight unto death against sin, against the world and the devil, and be as ready as once were the martyrs to give our life for our faith; the blue banners show, that we must walk the road of self-denial and mortification, with really humble and penitent feelings for our sins. The banners are also emblematic of Christ's victory over death and hell, and of the triumph of His religion over the pagans and Jews.

Why do we go around the fields in processions?

To beg the merciful God to bless the fields with His fatherly hand, give and preserve the fruits of the earth, and as He fills the animals with blessings, and gives them food at the proper time, so may He give to us also our necessary food.

What is the origin of the processions on St. Mark's day and in Holy Cross Week?

The procession on St. Mark's day was instituted even before the time of Pope Gregory the Great (607) who, however, brought

them into fervent practice, "in order," as he says, "to obtain in a measure forgiveness of our sins." The same pontiff introduced another procession called the "sevenfold procession," because the faithful in Rome took part in it in seven divisions, from seven different Churches, meeting in the Church of the Blessed Virgin. It was also named the "Pest procession," because it was ordered by St. Gregory to obtain the cessation of a fearful pestilence which was at that time raging in Rome, and throughout all Italy, which so poisoned the atmosphere, that one opening his mouth to gape or sneeze would suddenly fall dead (hence the custom of saying "God bless you", to one sneezing, and the sign of the cross on the mouth of one who gapes). In this procession the picture of the Blessed Virgin which according to tradition was painted by St. Luke, was carried by order of the Pope, that this powerful mother might be asked for her intercession, after which the pestilence did really cease. It is said, that the processions in Rogation Week owe their establishment to St. Mamertus, Bishop of Vienne in France; in the neighborhood of which city there were, in the year 469, terrible earth-quakes which caused great destruction, the fruits perished, and various plagues afflicted the people; the saintly bishop assembled the faithful, recommended them to the aid of the merciful God, and led them in procession around the fields. Such processions spread over France, and gradually throughout the Christian Church; they are held in order to obtain from God the averting of universal evils, such as war, famine, and pestilence, and are, at the same time, a preparation for the Ascension of Christ, who is our most powerful mediator with His Father, and whom we should especially invoke during these days.

With what intentions should we take part in the processions?

With the intention of glorifying God, of thanking Him for all His graces, and to obtain aid and comfort from Him in all our corporal and spiritual needs; with the view of professing our faith openly before the whole world, and with the sincere resolution of always following Christ, the Crucified, in the path of penance and mortification. He who entertains other intentions and takes part, perhaps, for temporal advantages, or for sinful pleasures, or to avoid labor, &c., sins against God and the Church, which weeps over such abuses and condemns them.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FESTIVAL OF THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD.

AT the Introit the Church sings the words which are spoken after the ascension by the angels to the apostles and dis-

ciples: Ye men of Galilee, why look you with surprise up to heaven? Alleluia. As you have seen him ascending to heaven, so shall he again return. Allel. Allel. Allel. (*Acts* i. 11.) Clap your hands, all ye nations: shout unto God with the voice of joy. (*Ps.* 46.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, O Almighty God, that we, who believe that Thy only Son, our Redeemer, ascended this day into heaven, may also have our hearts always fixed on heavenly things. Thro' the same.

LESSON. (*Acts* i. 1—11.) The former treatise, I made, O Theophilus, of all things which Jesus began to do and to teach, until the day on which, giving commandments by the Holy Ghost to the apostles whom he had chosen, he was taken up. To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion, by many proofs, by forty days appearing to them, and speaking of the kingdom of God. And eating together with them, he commanded them, that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but should wait for the promise of the Father, which you have heard (saith he) by my mouth: for John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. They therefore who were come together, asked him saying: Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel? But he said to them: It is not for you to know the times or moments, which the Father hath put in his own power; but you shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had said these things, while they looked on, he was raised up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they were beholding him going up to heaven, behold, two men stood by them in white garments. Who also said: Ye men of Galilee, why stand you looking up to heaven? This Jesus who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come as you have seen him going into heaven.

EXPLANATION. St. Luke who in his gospel, addressed to Theophilus, a Christian of note in Antioch, gave an account of the life, sufferings, and death of Jesus up to the time of His ascension into heaven, continues his account in the acts of the apostles, in which he describes in simple words that which Jesus did during the forty days following His resurrection, and the

manner in which in sight of His disciples He ascended into heaven. Rejoice with Christ to-day, that He has come into possession of His dearly bought kingdom in heaven, and pray: I rejoice, O King of heaven and earth, in the glory Thou hast this day attained in heaven. Sing to God, ye kingdoms of the earth; sing ye to the Lord; sing ye to God, who mounteth above the heaven of heavens, to the East. Give glory to God for Israel, his magnificence and his power is in the clouds. God is wonderful in his saints; the God of Israel is he, who will give power and strength to his people. Blessed be God. (*Ps.* lxvii. 33—36.)

GOSPEL. (*Mark* xvi. 14—20.) At that time: Jesus appeared to the eleven as they were at table, and he upbraided

them with their incredulity and hardness of heart, because they did not believe them who had seen him after he was risen again. (And he said to them: Go ye into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not, shall be condemned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name they shall cast out devils: they shall speak with new tongues: they shall take up serpents: and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them: they shall lay their hands upon the sick and they shall recover.) And the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God. But they going preached every where: the Lord working withal, and confirming the word with signs that followed.

The part of this gospel which is enclosed in brackets, is the gospel for the feast of St. Francis Xavier.

Why does Christ say to His apostles: Go ye into the whole world and preach the gospel to all creatures?

To show that no one is to usurp the office of preaching, but must look for his mission from the lawful pastor of the Church. And when Christ sends His apostles into the whole world, and to all nations without exception, He shows His willingness to save all men, and if this willingness is, in the case of many, not accomplished, the lack is not to be attributed to our Lord God, but to man, who either does not accept the doctrine of the gospel, or accepting, does not live in accordance with it, or renders himself by his obduracy in vice, unworthy that the gospel should be preached to him.

Are faith and baptism sufficient for salvation?

No, faith that is not active in love, not fruitful in good works, and therefore not meritorious (*Gal.* v. 6.), is not sufficient for salvation. "Such faith," says St. Anselm, "is not the faith of a Christian, but the faith of the devil." Only he will be saved who truly believes in Christ and His doctrine, and lives in accordance with it.

Is ours not the true faith, because all the faithful do not receive the signs which Christ promised?

St. Gregory very beautifully replies to this question: "Because the Redeemer said, that true faith would be accompanied by miracles, you must not think that you have not the faith, because these signs do not follow; these miracles had to be wrought in the beginning of the Church, because faith in her had to be

increased by these visible signs of divine power." And even now when such signs are necessary for the propagation of the faith, and victory over unbelief, God gives His faithful power to work them.

Are there such signs seen even now in the Catholic Church?

Yes, in both spiritual and material ways; for there have at all times been saints in the Church, who, as seen from their lives, have wrought miracles, on account of their faith, which even the unbelievers cannot deny; for instance St. Francis Xavier, who in the sight of the heathens, raised several dead persons to life. In the spiritual manner all pious Catholics still work such miracles; for, as St. Chrysostom says, "they expel devils when they drive out sin, which is worse than the devil, from themselves; they speak with new tongues when they converse no longer of vain and sinful, but of spiritual and heavenly matters." "They take up serpents," says St. Gregory, "when they understand how, by zealous exhortations, to lift others from the shame of vice, without being themselves poisoned by them; they drink deadly things without being hurt by them, when they hear tempting talk without being corrupted or led to evil by it; they lay their hands upon the sick and heal them, when they teach the ignorant, strengthen by their good example those who are wavering in virtue, keep the sinner from evil, and similar things." Strive to do this upon all occasions, my Christian, for God willingly gives you His grace for it, and you will thus be of more use to yourself and others, and honor God more than by working the greatest miracles.

Where and how did Christ ascend into heaven?

There where His sufferings began, from Mount Olivet, by which we learn, that crosses and afflictions, which are endured with patience and resignation, will raise us to heaven. Christ ascended into heaven by His own power, because He is God, and is now in His glorified, spiritualized humanity, sitting at the right hand of His Father, where He is our continual mediator with Him.

In whose presence did Christ ascend into heaven?

In the presence of His apostles, and many of His disciples, whom He had previously blessed (*Luke* xxiv. 51.), and who, as St. Leo says, derived consoling joy from His ascension. Rejoice, also, O Christian soul, for Christ has to-day opened heaven for you, and you may enter it, if you desire, in lively faith in Christ, if you perform works pleasing to God. Therefore St. Augustine very beautifully says: "Let us ascend in spirit with Christ, that when His day comes, we may follow with our body. Yet you must know, beloved brethren, that not pride, nor avarice, nor impurity, nor any other vice ascends with Christ; for with the teacher of humility pride ascends not, nor with the author of goodness ma-

lice, nor with the Son of the Virgin impurity." Let us then ascend with Him by trampling upon our vices and evil inclinations, thus building a ladder by which we can ascend; for we make a ladder to heaven of our sins when we tread them down in combatting them.

ASPIRATION. O King of glory! O powerful Lord! who hast this day ascended victorious, above all heaven, leave us not as poor orphans, but send us from the Father the Spirit of truth whom Thou hast promised. Alleluia.

Why is the paschal candle extinguished after the gospel on this day?

To signify that Christ, of whom the candle is a figure, has gone from His disciples.

INSTRUCTION ON MIRACLES.

And these signs shall follow them that believe.
(*Mark* xvi. 17.)

What is a miracle?

A miracle, as defined by St. Thomas of Aquinas, is anything beyond the ordinary, fixed state of things that is done through God. Thus when the sun stands still in his course, when thousands are fed with five loaves and two small fishes, when by a word or simple touch the dead are raised to life, the blind see, and the deaf hear, these are things contrary to nature, and are miracles which can only be performed by God or those persons to whom God has given the grace.

That God can work miracles, cannot be denied. God has made the laws of nature, and at any time it pleases Him, He can suddenly suspend them, and that God has at times done so, we have more solid and undeniable proofs than we have for the most renowned and best authenticated facts of history; for far more witnesses testify to miracles, the whole world has believed them, and been converted by them; these miracles have been sworn to by far more credible witnesses; more than eleven millions of martyrs have died to confirm and maintain their truth; no one gives up his life for lies and deceptions; the Jews and pagans have admitted them, but have ascribed them not to God, but to witchcraft and the power of demons; and precisely by this did they prove and acknowledge the truth of miracles, because in order to deny them, they were driven to false and absurd explanations of them.

Can men work miracles?

No man of and through himself can work a miracle, God only works miracles through man to whom He gives the power. That men have wrought miracles in the name of Jesus, as, for example,

the apostles and the saints, the history of the Christian Church in all ages bears testimony.

Can miracles be worked by the relics of saints, pictures, &c.?

The Church, in the Council of Trent, solemnly declares, that we are never to believe that there is in any picture or relic any hidden power by which a miracle can be worked, and that we are not to honor or ask any such thing of them. Therefore no miracle can ever be worked by them, but God can perform miracles through them, and He has, as the holy Scriptures and the history of the Church of Christ both prove. But when through certain pictures (usually called miraculous or grace working pictures) miracles do take place, that no deception may occur, the Church commands, that such a picture shall be exposed for the veneration of the faithful, until the truth of the miracles performed, is by a rigorous examination established beyond a doubt; she then causes such pictures to be respectfully preserved as monuments of the goodness and omnipotence of God.

Why are there not as many miracles in our times as there were in the first days of the Church?

Because the Church is no longer in need of such extraordinary testimony to the truth of her teachings. Thus St. Augustine writes: "He who in the face of the conversion of the world to Christianity demands miracles, and strives to doubt those which have been wrought in favor of this most wonderful change, is himself an astonishing miracle of irrationality and stupidity;" and St. Chrysostom says: "The question is sometimes asked: How happens it there are no miracles now-a-days? The answer is, because the knowledge of Christ is propagated all over the earth, and the Church is like a tree which, having once taken deep root and grown to a certain height, no longer needs to be carefully watered and supported."

INSTRUCTION FOR THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

THis Sunday and the whole week should serve as a preparation for the festival of Pentecost, that we may enable ourselves, by good works and pious devotional exercises, to participate in the graces of the Holy Ghost. At the Introit the Church sings: Hear, O Lord, my voice, with which I have cried out to thee. Alleluia. My heart hath said to thee: I have sought thy face: I will seek thy face, O Lord: turn not thy face from me. Alleluia. Alleluia. The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? (*Ps.* xxvi. 7—9.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O almighty and eternal God, inspire Thy servants with true devotion, and grant that we may serve Thy divine Majesty with sincere hearts. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (i. *Peter* iv. 7—11.) MOST DEARLY BELOVED: Be prudent, and watch in prayers. But before all things have a constant mutual charity among yourselves: for charity covereth a multitude of sins. Using hospitality one towards another without murmuring. As every man hath received grace, ministering the same one to another: as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the words of God. If any man minister, let him do it as of the power which God administereth: that in all things God may be honoured through Jesus Christ: to whom is glory and empire for ever and ever. Amen.

EXPLANATION. The practice of the virtues which St. Peter here prescribes for the faithful, are a splendid preparation for the reception of the Holy Ghost, for nothing renders us more worthy of His visit than true love for our neighbor, which willingly assists and gives; the good use of God's gifts, and the true fulfilment of the duties of our state of life. Strive, therefore, to practise these virtues and thus make yourself less unworthy of the gifts of the Holy Ghost. Say on this day, and daily during the week this

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Come, Holy Spirit, and fill the hearts of Thy faithful, and kindle in them the fire of Thy divine love, who hast assembled the nations of all tongues in unity of faith.

GOSPEL. (*John* xv. 26—27., xvi. 1—4.) AT THAT TIME: Jesus said to his disciples: When the Paraclete cometh whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, he shall give testimony of me: and you shall give testimony, because you are with me from the beginning. These things have I spoken to you, that you may not be scandalized. They will put you out of the synagogues: yea the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth a service to God. And these things will they do to you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. But these things I have told you: that when the hour shall come, you may remember that I told you of them.

Why is the Holy Ghost called the Paraclete?

Because He consoles those who suffer persecution for justice's sake, that is, who are persecuted because of their truly Christian life, and their defence of truth and justice, whether by word or pen, or by their life, as did the apostles and other saints, who were filled with the greatest and sweetest delight while suffering for Jesus' sake.

How did the Holy Ghost give testimony of Christ?

Through the apostles and disciples whom He made so eloquent and so courageous, that they intrepidly professed and preached that Christ is the Son of God, and the true Messiah. This doctrine He confirmed by wonderful miracles, and, as it were, sealed it by their blood which by His grace they shed for it.—The Holy Ghost gives even now testimony of Christ through the instructing Church,

that is, the preachers, through whom He speaks, and who must, therefore, be listened to reverently. We also must give testimony of Christ and profess by our lives, by patience in crosses and afflictions that He is our teacher, our Lord, and our God; for if we do not thus acknowledge Him in this world, He will not acknowledge us one day before His Father in heaven. (*Matt.* x. 33.)

Did the Jews sin in persecuting and killing the apostles?

Undoubtedly; for although they wrongly believed they were thus doing God a service, their ignorance and error was very sinful and deserving of punishment; for they could easily have known and been instructed in the truth.

In such punishable ignorance are also those Christians who, as they neglect all Christian instruction, hardly know what is necessary for salvation, and make nothing of many things which are grievous sins; as also those who are in doubt, whether they justly or unjustly possess such and such things, and yet for fear of being bound to restore them, neglect to settle the doubt.

What are the points which every Christian must know and believe in order to be saved?

They are the six which follow: that there is but one God, who has created and governs all things; that God is a just judge, who rewards the good and punishes the evil; that there are in the Deity three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; that the Son of God became man for love of us, taught us, and by His death on the cross redeemed us; that the Holy Ghost sanctifies us by His grace, without which we could not live well or be saved; that man's soul is immortal.

PETITION. Send us, O Lord Jesus! the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, who proceeds at the same time from the Father and from Thee, that He may console and strengthen us in all our afflictions. Graciously protect us, that we may give no scandal to any one, nor allow ourselves or others to be enticed into sin. Urge us by Thy Holy Spirit to learn all the truths of faith, to live in accordance with them, and arrive at Thee. Amen.

MORAL LESSON CONCERNING SCANDAL.

These things have I said to you, that you may not be scandalized. (*John* xvi. 1.)

How is scandal given?

IF something is done or left undone, even when it is known, that others will thus take occasion to sin. This is done in many different ways; if, for instance, you dress improperly, speak improper words, or sing bad songs, by which you can see, that

your neighbor will be tempted to think, desire, or act wrongly, or what is worse, if you act badly in the presence of others, or bring bad books, books against good morals, or against the holy faith among people; if you incite others to anger, to cursing, to vengeance, or if you prevent them from attending Church, the sermon, or doctrinal instruction, &c. In all these things you become guilty of the sin of scandal, and are, besides, guilty of all the sins which come from the scandal given.

If at the judgment we are unable to answer for our own sins, how then can we answer for the innumerable sins caused by the scandal we have given? Therefore Christ pronounces a terrible "woe" to those who give scandal. Woe to the man, He says, by whom scandal cometh! It were better for him, that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea. (*Matt.* xviii. 6.)

How do parents give scandal?

By giving their children bad example; by excessive anger, by cursing and swearing; by avarice, injustice and cheating; by discord and quarrels; by gluttony in eating and drinking; by extravagance and luxury in dress; by sneering at religion, good morals, &c.; by not keeping their children from evil company and associations, even bringing them into them; by not punishing and breaking up their children's vices. How much parents sin in such scandals, cannot be expressed; at the Day of Judgment their children will be their accusers!

How do householders give scandal to their servants and those under them?

As parents do to their children; by keeping them away, or not urging them by their own example or command to attend Church on Sundays and holidays; by giving them meat on fast-days; by commanding them to do sinful things, such as stealing, injuring others, &c.

INSTRUCTION CONCERNING PREPARATION FOR PENTECOST.

1. WE should withdraw, after the example of the Blessed Virgin and apostles, to some solitary place, or, at least, avoid, as much as possible, intercourse with others, speak but little, and attend with earnestness and perseverance to prayer; for in solitude God speaks to man.

2. We should cleanse our conscience by a contrite confession, become reconciled to our neighbor, if we have lived in enmity; for the Holy Ghost, as a spirit of peace and purity, lives only in pure and peaceful souls. (*Ps.* lxxv. 3.)

3. We should give alms according to our means, for it is said in the Acts of the Apostles (*Acts* x.) of the gentile centurion Cor-

nelius, that he made himself by prayer and almsdeeds worthy of the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

4. We should strongly desire to receive the Holy Ghost, and give expression to this desire by frequent aspirations to God, making use of the prayer: "Come, O Holy Ghost, &c."

INSTRUCTION FOR THE GREAT FESTIVAL OF PENTECOST.

What festival is this?

IT is the day on which the Holy Ghost descended visibly, in the form of fiery tongues, upon the apostles and disciples, who with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, were assembled together in prayer in a house at Jerusalem. (*Acts* ii.)

Why is this day called Pentecost?

The word "Pentecost" is taken from the Greek, and signifies fifty, and, as St. Jerome explains it, this day was the last of the fifty days, commencing with Easter, which the early Christians celebrated as days of rejoicing in the resurrection of the Lord.

Why is this day observed so solemnly?

Because on this day, the Holy Ghost having descended upon the apostles, the law of grace, of purification from sin, and the sanctification of mankind, was for the first time announced to the world; because on this day the apostles, being filled with the Holy Ghost, commenced the work of purifying and sanctifying mankind, by the baptism of three thousand persons who were converted by the sermon of St. Peter; and because on this day the Church of Jesus stepped visibly as a community into this world, and publicly professed her faith in her crucified Saviour.

Why did the Holy Ghost come upon the Jews' Pentecost?

Because on their Pentecost the Jews celebrated the anniversary of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, and God would show by sending the Holy Ghost on this day, that the Old Law had ceased and the New Law commenced. God also chose this time, that the Jews who on this day gathered from all countries at Jerusalem to celebrate the Pentecost, might be witnesses of the miracle, and hear the New Law announced by the apostles.

Why on the vigil of Pentecost is the baptismal font blessed, as on Holy Saturday?

Because the Holy Ghost is the Author of all sanctity and the Fountain of baptismal grace, and because in the Acts (i. 5.) the descent of the Holy Ghost is itself called a baptism.

In the Introit of Mass the Church sings in joy at the descent of the Holy Ghost: The Spirit of the Lord hath filled the

whole earth, Allel.: and the whole universe hath heard his voice, Allel. Allel. (*Wisd.* i. 7.) Let God arise, and his enemies be dispersed: let them who hate him, fly before his face. (*Ps.* 67.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who, by the light of the Holy Ghost, didst this day instruct the hearts of the faithful: grant, by the direction of the same Holy Spirit, that we may relish what is right, and always enjoy His consolation. Thro'—in the unity of the same, &c.

LESSON. (*Acts* ii. 1—11.) When the days of Pentecost were accomplished, they were all together in one place: and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them: and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak. Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men out of every nation under heaven. And when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded in mind, because that every man heard them speak in his own tongue. And they were all amazed and wondered, saying: Behold, are not all these, that speak, Galileans, and how have we heard, every man our own tongue wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews also and Proselytes, Cretes and Arabians: we have heard them speak in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.

Why did the Holy Ghost come upon the apostles in the form of fiery tongues?

To show that the Holy Ghost governs the tongues of the apostles and preachers when announcing the word of God; to inflame their hearts and the hearts of the faithful with the love of God and of their neighbor.

Why did the Holy Ghost appear amid the rushing as of a mighty wind?

To direct the attention of the people to the coming descent of the Holy Ghost, and to call them together to hear the sermon of the Apostle Peter.

What special effects did the Holy Ghost produce in the apostles?

He freed them from all doubt and fear; gave them His light for the perfect knowledge of truth; inflamed their hearts with the most ardent love, and incited in them the fiery zeal for the propagation of the kingdom of God, strengthened them to bear all sufferings and persecutions (*Acts* v. 41.), and gave them the gift of speaking in various languages, and of discerning spirits.

GOSPEL. (*John* xiv. 23—31.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: If any one love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him: he that loveth me not, keepeth not my words. And the word which you have heard, is

not mine: but the Father's who sent me. These things have I spoken to you, abiding with you. But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you: not as the world giveth, do I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid. You have heard that I have said to you: I go away and I come again to you. If you loved me, you would indeed be glad, because I go to the Father: for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it come to pass: that when it shall come to pass, you may believe. I will not now speak many things with you. For the prince of this world cometh, and in me he hath not any thing. But that the world may know that I love the Father: and as the Father hath given me commandment, so do I.

Why is the Holy Ghost expressly called "Holy", since this attribute is due to each of the divine persons?

Because He is the Author of inward sanctity and of all supernatural gifts and graces, and therefore to Him is specially ascribed the work of man's sanctification.

What does the Holy Ghost effect in men?

He so sanctifies them that they learn the truths of faith and salvation, and the beauty of virtue; He moves them to the desire of the good, and strengthens them in its performance, and finally, He gives them His fruits and gifts.

What are the gifts of the Holy Ghost?

According to the Prophet Isaias they are seven: 1. The gift of wisdom, which enables us to know God rightly, to esteem heavenly beyond temporal advantages, and to have taste and joy only for divine things. 2. The gift of understanding, by which we know and understand that which is proposed to us to believe; children and adults should pray fervently for this gift, especially before sermons, and instructions in the catechism. 3. The gift of counsel, which gives us the knowledge necessary to direct ourselves and others in uncertain matters, a gift especially necessary for superiors, for those about choosing their state of life, and for married people who live unhappily, and do not know how to help themselves. 4. The gift of fortitude, which strengthens us to endure and courageously overcome all adversities and persecutions for virtue's sake. 5. The gift of know-

ledge, by which we know ourselves, our duties, and how to fulfil them in a manner pleasing to God. 6. The gift of piety, which induces us to have God in view in all our actions, and our hearts inclined by love to His service. 7. The gift of the fear of the Lord, by which we not only fear the just punishment, but even His displeasure at every sin, more than all other things in the world.

What are the fruits of the Holy Ghost?

As St. Paul (*Gal.* v. 22-23.) enumerates them, they are twelve: 1. Charity. 2. Joy. 3. Peace. 4. Patience. 5. Benignity. 6. Goodness. 7. Longanimity. 8. Mildness. 9. Faith. 10. Modesty. 11. Continency. 12. Chastity. To obtain these fruits as well as the gifts of the Holy Ghost, we should daily say the prayer: "Come, O Holy Ghost, &c."

Why does Christ say: The Father is greater than I?

As Christ was at the same time God and Man, the Father was certainly greater than the Man Christ, but Christ as God is in all things equal to His Father.

Why does Christ say: I will not now speak many things with you?

Christ spoke these words shortly before His passion, and He wished by them to say, that the time was near at hand when Satan, by his instruments, the wicked Jews, would put Him to death, not because Satan had this power over Him, but because He Himself wished to die in obedience to His Father.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE MONDAY AFTER PENTECOST.
(Called WHIT MONDAY.)

The Introit of the Mass is the same as on the Feast of Corpus Christi.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who didst give the Holy Ghost to Thy apostles, hear the prayers of Thy people, that they may enjoy a happy peace, who, by Thy grace, have received the gift of true faith.

LESSON. (*Acts* x. 34., 42—48.) In those days: Peter opening his mouth, said: Brethren, the Lord commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is he who was appointed by God to be judge of the living and of the dead. To him all the prophets give testimony, that through his name all receive remission of sins, who believe in him. While

Peter was yet speaking these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word. And the faithful of the circumcision, who came with Peter, were astonished, for that the grace of the Holy Ghost was poured out upon the Gentiles also. For they heard them speaking with tongues, and magnifying God. Then Peter answered: Can any man forbid water, that these men should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we. And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

EXPLANATION. This lesson relates the manner in which the Holy Ghost descended upon the believing gentiles who were assembled with the centurion Cornelius, and heard the sermon of St. Peter with hearts burning for knowledge.—Do you, also, strive to assist at sermons with a heart desirous of learning, and the Holy Ghost will enlighten you; and do not forget before the sermon to invoke the Holy Ghost.

GOSPEL. (*John* iii. 16—21.) At that time: Jesus said to Nicodemus: God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting. For God sent not his Son into the world, to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by him. He that believeth in him, is not judged. But he that doth not believe, is already judged: because he believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment: because the light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the light: for their works were evil. For every one that doth evil, hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, that his works may not be reproved. But he that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, because they are done in God.

How may we know the love of God for us men?

By His giving us His only Son for our Teacher and Redeemer, yielding Him up for our sakes to the most ignominious and painful death of the cross. For God so loved the world, as to give His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting. (*John* iii. 16.)

Why, in spite of this love, are there so many lost?

Because so many despise this love of God and cast away Christ, the Light of the world, that is, do not follow His teachings,

even hate Him, loving better the darkness, that is, the suggestions of Satan, the pleasures of this world, whose prince is Satan.

Has not the Holy Ghost come into this world as a light?

Yes; for He inwardly enlightens the hearts of men by His grace, that they may properly understand the truths of salvation; and as the natural light leads us out of darkness, so the Holy Ghost by His supernatural light leads us out of the darkness of ignorance, and from the snares and dangers of the world and the devil, into eternal happiness.

MOTIVES FOR THE LOVE OF GOD.

God so loved the world, as to give His only begotten Son. (*John* iii. 16.)

WHat will we render to God for the love He has shown and every day and every moment shows to us? He has

loved us from all eternity when we were not, and when, consequently, He could not expect any return of love from us, and although He knew, that we would be sinners and enemies to Him, He loved us with infinite love, showing His love by creating us, and all things for us. But for His goodness and love even this was not enough; to release us from the misery of sin, He gave us His beloved, only Son, who, clothing Himself with our mortal flesh, and having become in all things, except sin, our equal, shed the last drop of His blood on the cross as a ransom for our sins; gives Himself to us for our nourishment in the most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar; offers Himself daily, in the Mass, to His Heavenly Father for us, and is, day and night, present with us in the most glorious Sacrament. What more could the infinite love of God do for us? There was something more that He could give, and that we were to receive: the Holy Ghost, who with all His gifts and favors was given to us in holy Baptism.

"If now," says St. Bernard, "we love him who does us good, assists us in our needs, undergoes danger in our behalf, how, then, must we love Him who has given us all that we have; who has given us the angels for our guardians, the sun, moon, and stars to shine for us, the earth for our dwelling, the elements, the plants, the animals to supply our necessities, our food, our pleasure; who continually preserves us, that we fall not back into our original nothingness; who constantly guards us from innumerable dangers and evils; who has not only endangered His life, but has really suffered the most bitter death for us; who so mercifully forgives us all our sins, heals all our weaknesses, keeps our lives from perdition, and crowns us with grace and mercy!" (*Ps.* cii.)

Let us therefore with our whole heart love this good and loving God, who has already loved us without any merit of ours, and be ashamed that we have until now loved Him so little, and performed so little for love of Him. God seems to live only for us, to occupy Himself only with us, and we—alas! instead of living for Him alone, have until now lived only for the world, lived only to offend Him! Let us cast ourselves down in sorrow before the face of God, and exclaim often with St. Francis of Assisi: "My God and my all! What art Thou? and what am I, but a worm of the earth? Most Holy Lord! Would that I loved Thee! Sweetest Lord! Would that I loved Thee!" and with St. Ignatius:

Only Thy grace,
Only Thy love,
Only that, O Lord,
Only that give me.
For it makes me so rich,
That I ask no more;
If I am Thine and Thou mine,
Then shall I be eternally happy.

INSTRUCTION FOR TUESDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

ON THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION.

When the apostles who were in Jerusalem, had heard that Samaria had received the word of God: they sent to them Peter and John. Who when they were come, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. For he was not as yet come upon any of them: but they were only baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost. (*Acts* viii. 14—17.)

Is confirmation a real Sacrament?

YEs, for it has the three true marks of a real Sacrament: a visible sign; an invisible sanctifying grace; the institution by Christ.

Did Christ really institute this Sacrament?

Christ is the Author of this Sacrament as He is of all the others, with this difference only, as St. Thomas of Aquinas says, that He instituted this only by promise and not by the actual giving of it; for it was necessary, that He should die, should rise from the dead, and ascend into heaven (*John* xvi. 7.) before giving the fulness of the Holy Ghost, in which consists the proper effect of this Sacrament. This according to the tradition of the fathers, is the doctrine of the infallible Church. Thus St. Clement, a disciple of the apostles, writes that St. Peter taught it to him, and that the other apostles had also announced it, in accordance with the command of the Lord. That the apostles administered this Sacrament by Christ's command, is clear from the Acts of the Apostles (viii. 14-17.) which state, that Peter and John laid their hands upon the newly baptized at Samaria, and prayed over them, thus giving them the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which St. Paul also did to the baptized at Ephesus. (*Acts* xix. 5, 6.)

What is the visible sign in confirmation?

The imposition of the bishop's hands, the anointing with holy chrism, and the words which the bishop unites with it: "N. N., I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, &c."

What graces are given by this Sacrament?

This Sacrament gives to those who have been baptized the Holy Ghost with the plenitude of His grace, and thus completes baptismal grace; for which reason confirmation is also called by the holy fathers: "Completion", "Sealing". It especially gives

strength to profess the faith firmly, and to live in accordance with it, and is therefore called "Confirmation" from the Latin firmare, to "strengthen", to "confirm"; it elevates man, who has by baptism become a child of God, to the dignity of a soldier of Christ, enrolls him as a warrior under the banner of the cross, imprints upon him an indelible mark, and thus distinguishes him from those who have been baptized, but not confirmed, and it can therefore be but once received.

Who has power to administer confirmation?

The usual ministers of this Sacrament are the bishops only; for according to the Acts of the Apostles (viii. 16.) only the apostles and their successors who are bishops, can give the Holy Ghost by imposition of hands. This right of the bishops St. Augustine calls an old custom, and given to them by the apostles.

What is the holy chrism which the bishop uses in confirmation?

The holy chrism which, as Pope Fabian testifies, Christ commanded to be used in confirmation, consists of balsam and olive-oil mixed together, and signifies the plenitude of grace which comes down from Christ through the Holy Ghost upon the one to be confirmed; the balsam represents the good odor of the edifying life which the one confirmed should lead, as said by the apostle: We are a good odor of Christ (ii. *Cor.* ii. 15.); the balsam also indicates, that as the body of a dead person embalmed with it, is guarded from corruption, so the soul by the heavenly grace obtained in confirmation, is preserved from the infection of sin.

Why is the forehead anointed in the form of a cross with chrism?

To remind the Christian that he is never to be deterred by either shame or fear from the public acknowledgment of the name of Jesus, but fight valiantly as a true soldier of Christ, under the banner of the cross against all the enemies of his salvation.

Why does the bishop impose his hands upon those about to be confirmed?

This shows that the actual communication of the Holy Ghost is taking place, as the apostles did and wrote (*Hebr.* vi. 2.), and that the person confirmed stands especially under God's protection.

What prayers are said by the bishop while he imposes his hands upon those being confirmed?

They are: "Almighty, eternal God, who hast deigned to create anew these Thy servants by water and the Holy Ghost, who hast also bestowed upon them the remission of all their sins, pour out upon them the sevenfold gifts of Thy Holy Ghost from heaven." Amen.

"The spirit of wisdom and understanding." Amen.

"The spirit of counsel and of fortitude." Amen.

"The spirit of knowledge and of piety." Amen.

"Fill them with the spirit of fear towards Thee, and sign them with the sign of the cross of Christ, granting them eternal life, through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who with Thee in the unity of the same God the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth in all eternity." Amen.

Why does the bishop especially ask for the spirit of the fear of the Lord?

Because the filial fear of the Lord is the foundation of all good, the beginning of all wisdom, the fountain of life, and gains for him who possesses it, eternal happiness. (*Ps.* cxi. 1.)

Why does the bishop give the one confirmed a light blow on the cheek?

To remind him that like Christ and the apostles, he must courageously bear all adversities and persecutions for the holy faith, and thus obtain that true peace the bishop wishes him.

Why do the sponsors lay their right hands on the shoulder of the one to be confirmed?

That it may be understood, that they are witnesses of the renewal of his faith; that they will exhort him to faithfully preserve the faith; that they will walk before him in the true path of virtue by good example. *[In regard to the spiritual affinity arising from confirmation, see the instruction concerning baptism in the instruction for the festival of the Holy Trinity.]*

Is confirmation necessary for salvation?

It is not absolutely necessary for salvation, but he who having the opportunity should neglect to receive it, would commit a grievous sin, even a mortal sin, because he openly shows by this, that he has no regard for God the Holy Ghost and for His assistance. Baptism lays the foundation for the Christian religion, but confirmation crowns the work baptism has commenced, because in confirmation, as the Roman Catechism teaches, the form of a true Christian is perfected.

What must be done by one who is to be confirmed?

He must be in a state of grace, and cleansed by a good confession from the sins committed after baptism, for to receive this Sacrament while in mortal sin, would be to commit another mortal sin; he should be well instructed in the truths of faith, especially in those relating to confirmation; he should have a sponsor or witness who has been confirmed; he should arouse in himself a great desire for the gifts of the Holy Ghost, asking God for them; he should receive the Sacrament with great reverence and devotion, and while being confirmed should make in his heart the promise to become and remain henceforth a true, zealous Catholic, never to be unfaithful to Christ and His holy Church; finally, those who are to be confirmed, must never forget that they must

be present from the first imposition of hands by the bishop, because this is the especial sign to which the granting of the gifts of the Holy Ghost is annexed. It is seen from all this, that it is not advisable to allow infants to be confirmed, because they do not know what they receive, nor can they be properly prepared, and they can be saved even if they die without confirmation.

What should be done after receiving confirmation?

Those confirmed should not go immediately out of Church, but should kneel down in a quiet part of it, thanking the Holy Spirit for the graces received; renewing the promise to serve God faithfully henceforth, to preserve the faith, never to be ashamed of it, and always to live in accordance with it. They should show themselves daily by an edifying life to be true Catholic Christians, and thus add to the truth, that unbelievers also may see the fruits of confirmation, and learn to love and respect a Church, that gives such glorious gifts to her children.

PRAYER AFTER CONFIRMATION.

[To be said often during the year.]

I thank Thee, O Holy Ghost, that Thou hast given me Thy grace in the Sacrament of Confirmation, and hast strengthened me against all temptations and persecutions, and I most humbly beseech Thee, that by Thy inward inspirations Thou mayst continually so impel me, that in all the dangers of my salvation, I may faithfully cooperate with the graces I have received, and never from fear or false shame transgress the commandments of God and the Church. Let me die rather than ever offend Thee, O Holy Ghost, refuse to heed Thy inspirations, or drive Thee from me by a mortal sin. Amen.

ON WEDNESDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

[Emberday.]

LESSON. (*Acts* v. 12—16.) In those days: Were many signs and wonders wrought among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. But of the rest no man durst join himself with them; but the people magnified them. And the multitude of men and women that believed in the Lord, was more increased: insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that when Peter came, his shadow at least might overshadow any of them, and they might be delivered from their infirmities. And there came also together to Je-

rusalem a multitude out of the neighbouring cities, bringing sick persons, and such as were troubled with unclean spirits, who were all healed.

EXPLANATION. The apostles assembled daily under the portico through which the gentiles were allowed to enter the temple, in order to open their eyes by the great miracles which God performed by the apostles, and to prepare and bring them to receive the Christian faith. St. Peter was especially distinguished, for even his shadow healed diseases, and afterwards he was the first to receive the gentiles into the Church. Thus in the apostles were verified Christ's words: He that believeth in me, the works that I do, he shall do also, and greater than these shall he do. (*John* xiv. 12.)

GOSPEL. (*John* vi. 44—52.) At that time: Jesus said to the multitude of the Jews: No man can come to me except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets: "And they shall all be taught of God." Every one that hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, cometh to me. Not that any man hath seen the Father, but he who is of God, he hath seen the Father. Amen, Amen, I say unto you: He that believeth in me, hath everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven: that if any man eat of it, he may not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world.

INSTRUCTION. From these words of Jesus that no man comes to Him unless drawn by the Father, that is, as St. Cyril says, unless the Father move him through exhortations, instructions, or revelations, it is seen that the grace of God is necessary for conversion, for faith and eternal happiness. "But that you may be drawn," says St. Augustine, "pray." Ask God incessantly for help and grace, that He may draw you wholly to Him, nourish and strengthen you with the true bread, the flesh of His Son, and you will thus gain eternal life.

ON FRIDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

[Emberday.]

LESSON. (*Joel* ii. 23—27.) Thus saith the Lord God: And you, O children of Sion, rejoice, and be joyful in the Lord your God: because he hath given you a teacher of justice, and he will make the early and the latter rain to come down for you as in the beginning. And the floors shall be filled with wheat, and the presses shall overflow with wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years which the locust, and the bruchus, and the mildew, and the palmer-worm hath eaten: my great host which I have sent upon you. And you shall eat in plenty and shall be filled: and you shall praise the name of the Lord your God, who hath done wonders with you, and my people shall not be confounded for ever. And you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel: and I am the Lord your God, and there is none besides: and my people shall not be confounded for ever, saith the Lord Almighty.

EXPLANATION. In the verses of the first and second chapter preceding these, the prophet announces to the Jews God's punishments because of their sins, urges them to repentance, and promises them a happy day in which the Teacher of justice, the Messiah, would visit them with all graces. O happy penance which prepares for him who performs it, such great blessings both in this world and in the world to come!

GOSPEL. (*Luke* v. 17—26.) At that time: It came to pass on a certain day, that Jesus sat teaching. And there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, that were come out of every town of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was to heal them. And behold, men brought in a bed a man who had the palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him. And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in, because of the multitude, they went up upon the roof, and let him down through the tiles with his bed into the midst, before Jesus. And when he saw their faith, he said: Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. And the Scribes and the Pharisees began to think, saying: Who is this who speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone? And when Jesus knew their thoughts, answering, he said to them:

What is it you think in your hearts? Which is easier to say: Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say: arise and walk? But that you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy) I say to thee, Arise, take up thy bed and go into thy house. And immediately rising up before them, he took up the bed on which he lay; and he went away to his own house, glorifying God. And all were astonished; and they glorified God. And they were filled with fear, saying: We have seen wonderful things to-day.

[For the explanation of this gospel see eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost.]

ON SATURDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

[Emberday.]

EPISTLE. (*Rom.* v. 1—5.) Brethren: Being justified by faith, let us have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access through faith, into this grace wherein we stand, and glory in the hope of the glory of the sons of God. And not only so: but we glory also in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience trial; and trial hope. And hope confoundeth not; because the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us.

EXPLANATION. The Catholic Church has always maintained, that not faith alone, which the devils have also, but faith active by love and showing itself by good works justifies man. The Catholic Church teaches this in opposition to those heretics who assert, that by faith in Christ man is already justified, bringing as proofs of their assertion the words of this chapter which St. Paul speaks concerning faith. The Church's doctrine in this respect is confirmed by St. Paul himself in many texts from his epistles (i. *Cor.* xiii. 2.; i. *Tim.* vi. 18.; *Tit.* iii. 18.), and by the traditions of all the fathers of the Church. — Believe in Jesus and His word, but also practise this faith in works of love, and you will be saved.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* iv. 38—44.) At that time: Jesus rising up out of the synagogue, went into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever: and they besought him for her.—And standing over her he commanded the fever, and it left her. And immediately rising,

she ministered to them. And when the sun was down, all they that had any sick with divers diseases, brought them to him. But he laying his hands on every one of them, healed them. And devils went out from many, crying out and saying: Thou art the Son of God. And he rebuking them, suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ. And when it was day, going out he went into a desert place: and the multitudes sought him, and came unto him: and they stayed him that he should not depart from them. To whom he said: To other cities also, I must preach the kingdom of God: for therefore am I sent. And he was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.

[For the explanation see Thursday in the third week of Lent.]

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

THis festival comes just after Pentecost, because as soon as they were instructed and consoled by the Holy Ghost, the apostles began in the name of the Holy Trinity openly to teach and to preach that which Christ had taught them.

Why is this festival celebrated?

That we may openly profess our faith in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which is the first of Christian truths, the foundation of the Christian religion, and the most sublime of all our mysteries; and that we may render thanks to each of the three Divine Persons for that which they have done for our salvation; for the Father has created us, the Son has redeemed us, and the Holy Ghost has sanctified us.

In praise and honor of the most Holy Trinity, the Church sings in the Introit of this day's Mass: Blessed be the Holy Trinity and Undivided Unity, which we honor, having seen the shining of its glory. (*Tob.* xii.) O Lord, our Lord, how admirable is thy name in the whole earth! (*Ps.* viii. 1.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Almighty and Eternal God, who hast given to Thy servants, that in the profession of the true faith they may know the glory of the Eternal Trinity, and in the power of that glory adore its unity: grant, that by our firmness in this same faith, we may be protected from all adversities. Through, &c.

EPISTLE. (*Rom.* xi. 33—36.) O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are his judgments, and how unsearchable his ways! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and recompense shall be made him? For of him, and by him, and in him are all things: to him be glory forever. Amen.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul's wonderment, in this epistle, is caused by the inscrutable judgment of God in rejecting the Jews and calling the gentiles. The Church avails herself of these expressions of St. Paul, to express her reverential astonishment at this incomprehensible mystery of the most Holy Trinity, which surpasses our understanding, and yet is the worthy object of our faith, our hope, and our love. But although neither angels nor men can fathom and comprehend this mystery, and although he who tries to comprehend it, must fear of being overcome by it, it cannot be difficult for the sound human intellect to believe it, since it is indubitably and evidently revealed by God, and we in many natural and human things accept for true and certain much that we cannot comprehend. Let us submit our intellect, therefore, and yield ourselves up to the faith; as there was indeed a time when men were martyred, when even all ages and conditions preferred to die rather than for one instant let this faith go, so let us rather wait until our faith is changed to contemplation, until we see the Triune God, face to face, as It is, and in the sight of that countenance become eternally happy. There should all our hopes, wishes, and desires be directed, and we should cease all fruitless investigations, endeavoring by humble faith and active love, to prove worthy of It's blissful contemplation; for if we do not love Him who is our all, our last end and aim, and lovingly desire Him, we will have no hope of one day possessing Him.

ASPIRATION. O incomprehensible, Triune God! O Abyss of wisdom, power, and goodness! To Thee all glory and adoration! In Thee I lose myself; I cannot contain Thee, do Thou contain me. I believe in Thee, though I cannot comprehend Thee; do Thou increase my faith; I hope in Thee, because I have promised myself all good from Thee; do Thou enliven my hope; I love Thee, because Thou art worthy of all love; do Thou inflame ever more my love, that in Thy love I may live and die. Amen.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxviii. 18—20.) And Jesus coming spoke to them, saying: All power is given to me in heaven and on earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptiz-

ing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you all days even unto the consummation of the world.

EXPLANATION. As God, Christ had, from all eternity, all and the same power that His Father had; as man, He has this same power by the union of His divinity with His humanity, and on account of the infinite merits of His passion. In virtue of this power, He said to His apostles, before the ascension, that, as His Heavenly Father had sent Him, even so He sent them to all nations, without exception, to teach all that He had commanded, and to receive them, by means of baptism, into the Church; at the same time He promised to be with them to the end of the world, that is, that He

would console them in sufferings, strengthen them in persecution, preserve them from error, and always protect them and their successors, the bishops and priests, even unto the consummation of the world.

[See Instruction on the doctrine of the infallibility of the Church, the first Sunday after Easter.]

ASPIRATION. Be with us, O Lord, for without Thee our pastors cannot produce fruit, nor their hearers accomplish any thing from their words. Be with us always, for we always need Thy help. All power is given to Thee, Thou hast, then, the right to command, and we are bound to obey Thy commands, which, by Thy Church, Thou hast made known to us. This we have promised in baptism, and now before Thy eyes, we renew those vows. Grant, now, that those promises which without Thee we could not have made, and without Thee cannot keep, may be fulfilled in our actions. Leave us not to ourselves, but be Thou with us, and make us obedient to Thee, that by cheerful submission to Thee, we may receive happiness.

INSTRUCTION ON THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM.

Teaching all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
(*Matt.* xxviii. 19.)

Is baptism a Sacrament?

YES, because in it the grace of God is received by means of an external sign, instituted by Christ.

What is this external sign?

The immersion into, or the pouring on of water, accompanied by the words: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

What does the baptismal grace effect?

It frees man, from original sin, and from all sins committed before baptism, causing Him to be born again, in a spiritual sense, in Christ, made a new creature, a child of God, and joint heir with Christ.

How many kinds of baptism are there?

There are three kinds: The baptism of desire, which consists in a heartfelt desire for the baptism of water, joined to a perfect love of God, or a perfect sorrow for sins committed, and the purpose to obey all God's commands; the baptism of blood, by which one gives his blood and suffers martyrdom for the true

faith, without having received the baptism of water; the baptism of water, which is the Sacrament of Baptism.

What do the different ceremonies of this Sacrament signify?

They are the external signs of that which baptism works inwardly upon the soul, and should impress the spectators with deep reverence for this Sacrament.

Why is it customary to have a godfather or godmother to hold the child in baptism?

That there may be a witness that the child has received baptism; that in case of the death of the parents, the godparents may assume their place, and have the child instructed in the necessary religious truths. St. Augustine speaking of the duties of godparents, very beautifully says: "They should use all care, often to admonish in true love their godchildren, that they may strive to lead a pure life; they should warn them against all detraction, all improper songs, and keep them from pride, envy, anger, and revenge, they should watch over them that they may preserve the Catholic faith unbroken, attend the Church services, listen to the word of God, and obey the priests and their parents." This takes for granted that the godparents are true believers, and of unquestionable morality; and that no one not a Catholic is chosen for a sponsor. For such a one would not instruct the child in the Catholic faith himself, or see that others do it, but would be more likely, as experience shows, to seek to draw the child over to error.

What results from this sponsorship?

In baptism, as in confirmation, a spiritual affinity originates between the sponsors, the one who baptizes or confirms, with the one baptized or confirmed, and with its parents, so that, by a decision of the Church, a godfather or godmother cannot contract marriage with any of these parties, unless the impediment is removed by dispensation, that is, by a special permission received from a spiritual superior. But the sponsors have no spiritual relationship to each other.

Why has the Church instituted this spiritual relation?

From reverence for these holy Sacraments, and that by this spiritual bond, the sponsors may be more closely connected with their godchildren, and be kept to the better fulfilment of their duties towards them.

Why is the person to be baptized not at once allowed to enter into the Church?

To indicate that until he has thrown off the disgraceful yoke of sin, and has entirely submitted to Christ the Lord, and His authority, he is unworthy to enter, because baptism is the door of God's grace, to the kingdom of heaven, and the communion of saints.

Why does the person receive a saint's name?

That by this name he may be enrolled, through baptism, into the number of Christians whom St. Paul calls saints; that he may have a patron and intercessor, and that the saint whose name he bears, may be his model and exemplar, by which he may regulate his own life.

Why does the priest breathe in the face of the one to be baptized?

That the power of the evil spirit may be destroyed, his hellish fire drawn from the heart, and instead of it, according to the example set by Jesus, the life giving Holy Ghost (*John* xx. 22.) be breathed into him, and spiritual life bestowed upon him.

Why does the priest impose his hand so many times upon the head of the person to be baptized?

To show that he is now the property of God, stands under His protection, and hears His Church.

What is signified by the many exorcisms or adjurations?

That the evil spirit's connection with the person should cease, who thenceforth should not heed the temptations to evil, and that Satan be expelled, in the name of Jesus, from him.

Why is the person so often signed with the sign of the cross?

To signify that through the power of Christ's merits and of His death on the cross, baptism washes away original sin; that the person intends to be henceforth a follower of Christ the Crucified, and to fight valiantly, under the banner of the cross, against the enemies of his salvation, and will follow Christ on the way of the cross, even unto death.

Why is salt placed in the person's mouth?

This is done to signify that by the doctrine of faith, and the gift of grace, he is preserved from the rottenness of sin; that he should have a taste for good works, and find his pleasure in the nourishment of divine wisdom.

Why are his ears and nose touched with spittle?

That as Christ put spittle on the eyes of the man born blind, and thus enabled him to see, so, by baptism, the spiritual blindness of the soul is removed, and his mind receives light to behold heavenly wisdom. "Also," as St. Ambrose says, "the person is thus instructed to open his ears to priestly admonitions, and become a sweet perfume of Christ."

Why does the priest ask: "Dost thou renounce the devil, and all his works, and all his pomps?"

That the Christian may know, that his vocation requires him to renounce and combat the devil, all his works, and suggestions, and all his pomps. Thus St. Ambrose very beautifully says to a newly baptized: "When the priest asked: Dost thou renounce

the devil and all his works, what didst thou reply? "I renounce them." Dost tho urenounce the world, its glitter, and its pleasures? "I renounce them." Think of these promises, and let them never depart from thy mind. Thou hast given thy handwriting to the priest, who stands for Christ; when thou hast given thy note to a man, thou art bound to him. Now thy word is not on earth, but preserved in heaven."

Why is the person anointed on the shoulder and breast with holy oil?

As Sts. Ambrose and Chrysostom explain, this is done to strengthen him to make a valiant contest for Christ; as the old fighters anointed themselves with oil before they entered the arena, so is he anointed, on the breast, that he may attain courage and force bravely to combat the world, the flesh, and the devil, and on the shoulder, that he may be strong to bear the yoke of Christ's commands constantly and untiringly, and go running with unbroken faithfulness, over the toilsome racecourse of life, to God, and in His holy service.

Why are the "Our Father", and "I believe in God", said at baptism?

That, when it is a grown person, an acknowledgment of faith may by this means be made in the face of the Church; and that, when it is only a child that is baptized, the sponsors should do this in its place, and be thus reminded to carefully attend, that their godchildren are well instructed in these as in all other Christian truths.

Why does the priest expressly ask the person if he will be baptized?

Because as man, through Adam, of his own free will obeyed the devil, so now when he would be received among the number of Christ's children, he must, to obtain salvation, of his own free will obey the precepts of God.

Why is water poured three times upon the person's head?

This is done, as St. Gregory the Great writes, with the intention of honoring the three days our Lord remained in the sepulchre. In early times the Church immersed the person three times in the water, but from different causes this custom has been given up.

Why is the person anointed on the top of the head with chrism?

This anointing is, so to speak, the crown of the young Christian. As in the Old Law the kings were anointed (i. *Kings* x. 1.), as Jesus is the Anointed One, and as the Apostle St. Peter calls the Christians a chosen race, a kingly priesthood, a holy people (i. *Peter* ii. 9.), so the baptized by means of this unction is embodied in Christ, the Anointed One, and participates in His

priesthood and kingly dignity. What an exalted position is the Christian's! He is the anointed one of the Lord, and in a spiritual sense a priest, because he constantly brings himself to the Lord God as a pleasing sacrifice in prayer, mortification, &c. He is king when he rules over his inclinations, submits them to reason, and reason to the Lord. Besides this he is king by the claims which, through baptism, he possesses to the kingdom of heaven. Through the chrism he becomes the blessed temple of the Holy Ghost, the sacred vessel which in time, through communion, will contain the precious body and the precious blood of Christ. How does he insult himself, when by a grievous sin he tramples his exalted dignity under his feet, and stains his soul, the temple of the Holy Ghost!

What is the meaning of the white dress, the cap, or the little handkerchief which the baptized receives?

The holy fathers teach that this represents the glory to which by baptism we are born again; the purity and beauty with which the soul, having been washed from sin in the Sacrament of baptism, is adorned, and the innocence which the baptized must preserve through his whole life.

Why is a lighted candle placed in his hand?

This represents the flame of love for God and our neighbor which the child must henceforth continually carry, like the five wise virgins (*Matt.* xxv. 13.), on the path to meet the Lord, that when his life is ended, he may be admitted to the eternal wedding-feast; it is also an emblem of the Christian doctrine which preserves the baptized from the darkness of error, ignorance, and sin, illumines his understanding, and leads him safely in the way of virtue; it signifies also the light of good example which he should keep ever burning.

Can any one baptize in an emergency?

Yes; that no one may be deprived of salvation, even the father or mother in case of extreme danger can baptize their child.

What must be particularly observed in such baptisms?

The person who baptizes must be careful to use only river-, well-, or rain-water; rose-water or other mixed or distilled waters must not be used; to wet the child's head, saying at the same time devoutly and distinctly these words: "N. N., I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" having all the while the intention of baptizing as the Church does, in the manner required by Christ.

INSTRUCTION ON THE RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS.

All the dignities and graces which we receive in holy baptism, God secures to us for the future, but only on the condition

that we keep our baptismal vows. Every Christian in baptism makes a bond with God through the mediation of Christ who has sealed it with His blood. This bond consists on man's part in the promise to renounce forever the devil and all his works, and all his pomps, that is, constantly to suppress the threefold lust of the eyes, the flesh, and the pride of life, by which the devil leads us to sin, and to believe all that God has revealed, and that His holy Church proposes to our belief, and diligently and properly to make use of all the means of salvation flowing from the Church. On God's part this bond consists in cleansing us from all sin, in bestowing all the gifts of the Holy Ghost, in adopting us as His children, and in the assurance of the inheritance of heaven. This bond should last till death; it is never broken by the infinitely true and faithful God, but so often by weak and fickle man, who is too often inclined to break it, and should, therefore, in compliance with the desire of the Church, often remind himself of it, and from time to time renew it in the sight of God. This should be particularly done before receiving the holy Sacrament of Confirmation, before first Communion, on the vigils of Easter and Pentecost, at the blessing of baptismal water, on the anniversaries of baptism and confirmation, before making any solemn vow, before entering into matrimony, when in danger of death. This renewal of baptismal vows can be made in the following manner: Placing ourselves in the presence of God, we kneel down, fold our hands, and say with fervent devotion:

I believe in God the Father, Almighty Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was born and suffered.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.

I renounce the devil, all his works, and all his pomps.

Christ Jesus! With Thee I am united, to Thee alone I cling, Thee only will I follow, for Thee to live, for Thee to die is my desire. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

DOCTRINE OF THE THREE IN ONE GOD.

What is God?

God is of Himself the most perfect being, the highest, best good, who exists from all eternity, by whom heaven and earth are created, and from whom all things derive and hold life and existence, for of Him, and by Him, and in Him are all things. (*Rom.* xi. 36.)

What is the Blessed Trinity?

The Blessed Trinity is this same one God who exists in one single nature and substance, and at the same time in three persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Is each of these three persons God?

Yes, because each of them has the divine nature and substance.

Are they not three Gods?

No, because all three of these persons have one and the same divine nature and substance.

Is any one of these three persons older, mightier, or greater than the others?

By no means, for they are all three from eternity entirely equal to each other in the divine omnipotence, greatness, and majesty, and must, therefore, be equally adored and venerated.

Ought one to give himself up to the investigation of the most Blessed Trinity?

No; "for," says the saintly Bishop Martinus, "the mystery of the Trinity cannot be comprehended by the human intellect, no one however eloquent of tongue could exhaust it; if entire books were written about it, so that the whole world were filled with them, yet the unspeakable wisdom of God would not be expressed. God who is indescribable, can in no way be described. When the human mind ceases to speak of Him, then it but begins to speak." Therefore the true Christian throws his intellect under the feet of faith, not seeking long to understand that which the human mind can as little comprehend, as a tiny hole in the sand can contain the immeasurable sea. An humble and active faith will make us worthy some day in the other world, to see with the greatest bliss this mystery as it is, for in this consists eternal life, that by a pious life we may glorify and know the only true God, Christ Jesus, His Son, and the Holy Ghost.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST,

on which is celebrated the Feast of the most Holy Trinity.

THE Introit of this day's Mass is an encouragement to confidence in God's mercy: Lord, I have trusted in thy mercy, my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation, I will sing to the Lord who giveth me good things. How long, O Lord, wilt thou forget me? Unto the end? How long dost thou turn away thy face from me? (*Ps.* xii. 1-6.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, the strength of such as hope in Thee: mercifully hear us calling on Thee: and since mortal weakness can do nothing without Thee, grant us the assistance of Thy grace; that in observing Thy commandments, we may please Thee both in will and action. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*John* iv. 8—21.) Dearly beloved: God is charity. By this hath the charity of God appeared towards us, because God hath sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we may live by him. In this is charity: not as though we had loved God, but because he hath first loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins. My dearest, if God hath so loved us: we also ought to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abideth in us, and his charity is perfected in us. In this we know that we abide in him, and he in us: because he hath given us of his spirit. And we have seen, and do testify, that the Father hath sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world; whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God, and we have known, and have believed the charity, which God hath to us. God is charity; and he that abideth in charity, abideth in God, and God in him. In this is the charity of God perfected in us, that we may have confidence at the day of judgment: because as he is, we also are in this world. Fear is not in charity: but perfect charity casteth out fear, because fear hath pain. And he that feareth, is not perfected in charity. Let us therefore love God, because God first hath loved us. If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother: he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not? And this commandment we have from God, that he, who loveth God, love also his brother.

EXPLANATION. Stronger motives for the love of God and of our neighbor than these cited by St. John, who, because of his ardent love of God, was named the "loved disciple", cannot be brought. If we but consider and reflect upon them, it is impossible to resist his words. The motives for the love of God are diffusely explained in the instruction for the Monday after Pentecost, and may be omitted here. We should be induced to love our neighbor by the love, which God has for him, for whatever God

loves is certainly worthy of our love; and we cannot love God, when we do not love our neighbor. "Since your neighbor," says St. Augustine, "is your brother, and yet you do not love him, how can you love God whose commandment you thus reject?"

GOSPEL. (*Luke* vi. 36—41.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: Be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you shall be forgiven. Give, and it shall be given to you; good measure and pressed down and shaken together and running over shall be given into your bosom. For with the same measure that you

shall mete, withal it shall be measured to you again. And he spoke also to them a similitude: Can the blind lead the blind? do they not both fall into the ditch? The disciple is not above his master: but every one shall be perfect, if he be as his master. And why seest thou the mote in thy brother's eye; but the beam that is in thy own eye, thou considerest not? or how canst thou say to thy brother: Brother, let me pull the mote out of thy eye, when thou thyself seeest not the beam in thy own eye? Hypocrite, cast first the beam out of thine own eye, and then thou shalt see clearly to take out the mote from thy brother's eye.

Be ye merciful as your Father also is merciful!

If we would be children of the Heavenly Father, we must imitate Him in mercy and goodness; and as He lets His sun shine on the good and the bad, and allows the dew of His grace to fall alike on the just and the unjust, even so must we love not our friends merely, but our enemies also.

Judge not, and you shall not be judged; condemn not, and you shall not be condemned!

Two kinds of judgments are here forbidden by Christ: the rash or presumptuous, and the arrogant judgment. The rash judgment, which is usually a groundless suspicion, is forbidden, because by it the love and honor of our neighbor is injured, for no one can look into the heart, and see the motive of another's omissions and commissions; of these no one but God can judge, who tries the heart and reins, and knows the intention. The arrogant judgment, is even more to be condemned, and is when one judges another without any right, as his superior, to do so. By both of these judgments man usurps a right of God, as St. Dorotheus says, takes vengeance from God, and robs himself of all divine protection. "A double, yes, a triple sin it is," says St. Chrysostom, "to judge another, and without pity draw the beam from his eye."

Forgive, and you shall be forgiven!

Christ says by this, that we shall receive forgiveness from God for the injuries we have committed against Him, only upon the condition that we from our hearts forgive others their injuries to us. "For," says St. Chrysostom, "how canst thou raise thy hand to heaven, or move thy tongue and ask forgiveness, when thou wilt not forgive? When thou wishest, that God forgive thy sins, He will not do it, because thou hast an angry feeling towards thy brother."

Give, and it shall be given to you!

We are poor and greatly need, that God should give to us; and, therefore, like petitioners, we say every day: "Give us this day our daily bread." But God answers us: Give, and it shall be given to you. You are my poor and you have other poor among you, do you then to these poor, as you would that I should do to you. The goodness and love of God should always be our model, although we can never reach it, for between our love and goodness, and the love and goodness of God, there is a manifest difference. We can give but little, while God gives much, but for the little which we give to the poor, God gives us a good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over. The promise Give, and it shall be given to you applies also to all other works which we do for the love of God, for He rewards everything, even the slightest thing done in His name, with infinite bounty and richness, here upon this earth with new graces and benefits, and with eternal glory in heaven.

Can the blind lead the blind?

By these words the Saviour teaches, that no one should rebuke or reproach his neighbor for faults from which he himself is not free, for as the disciple is not above the master, the master ought certainly to be perfect; that one blind person shall not lead another, that the advice may not be required: Cast first the beam, that is, the great faults, out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to take the mote, that is, the small faults, out of thy brother's eye. The blind who leads another and falls into the ditch, is also he who is led by his carnal desires, and does not permit himself to be led by the light of faith, and guided by the hand of divine grace. This is the most dangerous and most fearful blindness, because it inevitably leads to destruction.

ASPIRATION. O that I had been always good and merciful to my neighbor, that I might also, one day, find grace with God! O that I had never rashly judged any one, that I might, one day, be not strictly judged and condemned by God for my sins! Ah, my God! I regret from my heart these wrongs, and hope forgiveness for them from Thee, as I also from my heart forgive those who have offended me! Enlighten my blindness, O Lord, that I may guard against such sins in future, and not follow the desires of the flesh, that I may find the right path to heaven, and by a good example lead others there. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR CORPUS CHRISTI.

Why is this day called Corpus Christi?

BEcause on this Thursday the Catholic Church celebrates the commemoration of the institution of the most blessed Sacrament of the Altar, or the festival of the Body of our Lord; therefore the Latin name corpus Christi: "body of Christ."

Who instituted this festival?

The head of the Church, Pope Urban IV., who, in the decree concerning it, gives the following explanation of the institution and grandeur of this festival: "Although we daily, in the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, renew the memory of this holy Sacrament, we believe that we must, besides, solemnly commemorate it every year, to put the unbelievers to shame; and because we have been informed, that God has revealed to some pious persons that this festival should be celebrated in the whole Church, we direct that on the first Thursday after the octave of Pentecost the faithful shall assemble in Church, join with the priests in singing the word of God," &c. There was therefore a threefold cause for the institution of this festival: The grandeur of the divine mystery itself, the shaming of those unbelievers who deny the truth of this mystery, and the revelation made to some pious persons. This revelation was made to a pious nun at Liège, named Juliana, and to her pious friends Eve and Isabella. Juliana had frequently, when praying, a vision in which she saw the bright moon, with one part of it somewhat dark; and at her request God gave her to understand it to mean, that one of the grandest festivals was yet missing in the Church: the festival of the most blessed Sacrament of the Altar. In 1246, she related this vision to Robert, Bishop of Liège, who after having investigated the matter with the aid of several men of learning and devotion, among whom was Jacob Pantaleon, Archdeacon of Liège, afterwards Pope Urban IV., made arrangements to introduce this festival in his diocese; but death prevented him from doing so. After the bishop's death the Cardinal Legate Hugh undertook to carry out his directions, and actually celebrated the festival for the first time in the year 1247, in the Church of St. Martin at Liège. Several bishops followed this example, and the festival was observed in several dioceses, before Pope Urban IV. finally in 1264 ordered its celebration by the whole Church. This order was confirmed by Clement V. at the Council of Vienna in 1311, and the Thursday after the octave of Pentecost appointed for its celebration. In 1317, Pope John XXII. added the solemn procession.

Why are there such grand processions on this day?

For a public profession of our holy faith that Christ is really, truly, and essentially present in this blessed Sacrament; for a

public deprecation of all injuries, irreverence, and offences, which have been and are committed by impious men against Christ in this blessed Sacrament; for the solemn veneration and adoration due to the Son of God in this Sacrament; in thanksgiving for its institution, and for all the graces and advantages received from it; and finally, to draw down the divine blessing upon the people and the country.

Had this procession a prototype in the Old Law?

Yes, in that procession which carried the Ark of the Covenant containing the manna, the figure of the blessed Sacrament.

At the Introit the Church in her joy, sings in David's words: He fed them with the fat of wheat, Alleluia: and filled them with honey out of the rock. Allel. Allel. Allel. Exult in God our help; joyfully sing to the God of Jacob. (*Ps.* lxxx.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who in this wonderful sacrament, hast left us a perpetual memorial of Thy Passion; grant us, we beseech Thee, so to reverence the sacred mysteries of Thy body and blood, that in our souls we may always be sensible of the fruit of the redemption Thou hast purchased for us. Who livest.

EPISTLE. (i. *Cor.* xi. 23—29.) Brethren: I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke, and said: Take ye, and eat: this is my body which shall be delivered for you: this do for the commemoration of me. In like manner also the chalice, after he had supped, saying: This Chalice is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as often as you shall drink it, for the commemoration of me. For as often as you shall eat this bread, and drink this chalice, you shall shew the death of the Lord, until he come. Therefore whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink of the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself: and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord.

GOSPEL. (*John* vi. 56—59.) At that time: Jesus said to the multitude of the Jews: My flesh is meat indeed: and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh

my blood, abideth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead. He that eateth this bread, shall live forever.

[The explanation of the epistle and gospel is contained in the instruction which comes after the following remarks on the manna of which Jesus here speaks.]

The Jews liberated, by the powerful hand of God, from Egyptian captivity, went dryfooted through the Red Sea, whose waters became the grave of their pursuer, the king Pharaoh, and of his whole army. Having arrived in the desert Sin they began to murmur

against Moses and Aaron, their leaders, on account of lack of bread, and demanded to be led back to Egypt where there was plenty. The Lord God took pity on His people. In the evening He sent into their camps great flocks of quails, which the Jews caught and eat, and on the morning of the next day the whole ground was covered with white dew, and in the desert something fine, as if pounded in a mortar, looking like frost on the earth, which as soon as the Jews beheld, they exclaimed in surprise: "Man hu?" "What is that?" But Moses said to them, "This is bread which the Lord has given you." And they at once began to collect the food which was white, small as coriander-seed, tasted like wheat-bread and honey, and was henceforth called man, manna, by them. God let this manna fall for them every morning, Sabbaths excepted, for forty years, and the Jews lived upon it in the desert, until they came to the promised land. This manna was a figure of the blessed Sacrament of the Altar, which is daily prepared on the altar, contains all sweetness, and nourishes the soul of him who with proper preparation receives it, so that whoever eats it worthily, dies not though his body sleeps in the grave, for Christ will awaken him to eternal life.

DETAILED INSTRUCTION ON THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR, AND ON HOLY COMMUNION.

What is the Sacrament of the Altar?

IT is that Sacrament in which under the appearance of bread and wine the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are really, truly, and substantially present.

Is it a true Sacrament?

Yes, for it contains a visible sign, invisible graces for the soul's sanctification, it was promised, and is really instituted by Christ.

When and in what manner did Christ promise this Sacrament?

About one year before its institution He promised it in the synagogue at Capharnaum, according to St. John the Evangelist (vi. 24-65) in this manner: When Jesus, near the Tiberian Sea, had fed five thousand men in a miraculous manner, with a few small loaves, these men would not leave Him, because they marvelled at the miracle, were anxious for their bread, and desired to make Him their king. But Jesus fled to a high mountain, and in the night went with His disciples to Capharnaum which was a town on the opposite side of the sea; but a multitude of Jews followed Him there, and He made use of the occasion to speak of the mysterious soulbread which He would one day give to them and to all men. He first exhorted them, not to go so eagerly after the perishable bread of the body, but to seek the bread of the soul, which lasts forever,

and which the Heavenly Father would give them, through Him, in abundance. This imperishable bread was the divine word, His holy doctrine, especially the doctrine that He had come from heaven to guide us to eternal life. (*vers.* 25 – 38.) At these last words the Jews murmured, and the Saviour quieted them by showing them that no one could believe without a special grace from His Heavenly Father (*v.* 43, 44), that He was the Messiah, and had come from heaven. After this introduction setting forth that the duty of faith in Him and in His divine doctrine, was a spiritual nourishment, Christ very clearly unfolded the mystery of another bread for the soul which was to be given only at some future time, and this the Saviour did not ascribe to the the Heavenly Father, as He did the bread of the divine word, but to Himself by plainly telling who was this bread: I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever, and the bread which I shall give, is my flesh for the life of the world. (*v.* 51, 52.)

But the Jews would not believe these words, so clearly expressed, for they thought their fulfilment impossible, and said: How can this man give us his flesh to eat? (*v.* 53.) But Jesus recalled not His words, answered not the Jew's objections, but confirmed that which He had said, declaring with marked emphasis: Amen, amen, I say unto you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you. (*v.* 54.) He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead. He that eateth this bread, shall live forever. (*v.* 55 – 59.) Jesus, therefore, said distinctly and plainly, that at a future time He would give His own body and blood as the true nourishment of the soul; besides, the Jews and the disciples alike received these words in their true literal sense, and knew that Jesus did not here mention His body and blood in an allegorical sense, but meant to give them His own real flesh and blood for food; and it was, because they believed it impossible for Jesus to give them His body and blood for food, and because they supposed He would give them His dead flesh in a coarse, sensual manner, that the Jews murmured, and even several of His disciples said: This saying is hard, and who can hear it? But Jesus persisted in His words: My flesh is meat indeed, &c., and calls the attention of His disciples to another miracle: to His

future ascension, which would be still more incredible, but would come to pass; and by the words: It is the spirit which quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing, the words which I have spoken to you, are spirit and life (*v.* 64), He shows them, that this mystery could be believed only by the light and grace of the Holy Spirit, but could not be comprehended by a carnal, sensual method of thought, and the partaking of His body and blood would not be in a coarse, sensual manner, but in a mysterious way. But in spite even of this, many of His disciples still found the saying hard, and left Him, and went no longer with Him. (*v.* 67.) They found the saying hard, because, as our Saviour expressly said, they were lacking in faith. He let them go, and said to His apostles: Will you also go away? thereby giving it to be seen that those who left Him, understood Him clearly enough, and that His words did contain something hard for the mind to believe. But the apostles did not leave Him, they were too well assured of His divinity, and that to Him all was possible, as St. Peter clearly expresses: Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and known that thou art Christ, the Son of God. (*v.* 69, 70.)

From the account given by St. John, it is plainly seen that Christ really promised to give us for our food His most precious body and blood, really and essentially, in a wonderful, mysterious manner, and that He did not as those who contemn this most holy Sacrament assert, speak figuratively of faith in Him. If Jesus had so meant it, He would have so explained it to the Jews and to His disciples who took His words literally, and therefore could not comprehend, how Jesus could give His flesh and blood to them for their food. But Jesus persisted in His words, that His flesh was truly food, and His blood really drink, He even made it the strictest duty to eat His flesh and drink His blood (*v.* 54); He shows the benefits arising from this nourishment of the soul (*v.* 55), and the reason why this food was so necessary and useful (*v.* 56); and when His disciples, because it was a hard saying, left Him, He allowed them to go, for they would not believe His words, and could not believe them on account of their carnal manner of thinking. For this holy mystery must be believed, and cannot be comprehended. Jesus has, then, promised, as the Catholic Church has always maintained and taught, that His body and blood would be present under the appearance of bread and wine in the blessed Sacrament, a true nourishment for the soul, and that which He promised, He has really given.

When and in what manner did Christ institute the most holy Sacrament of the Altar?

At the Last Supper, on the day before His passion, after He had with His apostles eaten of the paschal lamb, which was a

prototype of this mystery. Three sacred Evangelists Matthew (xxvi. 26—29), Mark (xiv. 22—24), and Luke (xxii. 19—20) relate in few, but plain words, that on this evening Jesus took into His hand bread and the chalice, blessed and gave both to His disciples, saying: This is my body, that will be given for you; this is my blood, which will be shed for you and for many. Here took place in a miraculous manner, by the allpowerful word of Christ, the mysterious transformation, here Jesus gave Himself to His apostles for food, and instituted that most holy meal of love of which the Church says, that it contains all sweetness. That which three evangelists plainly relate, St. Paul confirms in his first epistle to the Corinthians (xi. 23—29. *See this day's epistle.*), in which to his account of the institution of the blessed Sacrament he adds: Whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily (that is, in

a state of sin), shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord,.... eateth and drinketh judgment to himself. (*v.* 27—29.)

From these words and those of the three sacred evangelists already mentioned, it is clear that Jesus really fulfilled His promise, really instituted the most holy Sacrament, and gave His most sacred body and blood to the apostles for their food. No one of the evangelists, nor St. Paul, informs us that Christ said: this will become my body, or this signifies my body. All agree that our Saviour said this is my body, this is my blood, and they therefore decidedly mean us to understand that Christ's body and blood are really, truly, and essentially present under the appearance of bread and wine, as soon as the mysterious change has taken place. And this is confirmed by the words: that is given for you, which shall be shed for you and for many; because Christ gave neither bread nor wine, nor a figure of His body and blood, for our redemption, but His real body, and His real blood, and St. Paul could not assert that we could eat the body and blood of the Lord unworthily, if under the appearance of bread and wine were present not the real body and blood of Christ, but only a figure of them, or if they were only bread and wine. This is also proved by the universal faith of the Catholic Church, which in accordance with Scripture and the oldest, uninterrupted Apostolic traditions*) has always believed and taught, that under the appearance of bread and wine the real body and blood of Christ are present, as the Oecumenical Council of Trent expressly declares (*Sess.* xiii. *c.* 1. *can.* 1. *de sacros. Euchar.*): "All our ancestors who were of the Church of Christ, and have spoken of this most blessed Sacrament, have in the plainest manner professed, that our Redeemer instituted this wonderful Sacrament at the Last Supper, when having blessed the bread and wine He assured the apostles in the plainest and most exact words, that He was

*) Thus St. Ignatius who was instructed by the apostles themselves, rebukes in these words those who even at that time would not believe in the change of the bread and wine into the body of the Lord: "They do not believe that the real body of Jesus Christ our Redeemer who suffered for us and has risen from death, is contained in the Sacrament of the Altar." *(Ep. ad. Smyr.)* Thus St. Irenaeus who was a disciple of St. Polycarp, a pupil of St. John the Evangelist, writes: "Of the bread is made the body of Christ." *(Lib.* iv. *adv. hær.)* In the same manner St. Cyril: "Since Christ our Lord said of this bread, This is my body, who dares doubt it? Since He said, This is my blood, who dares to say, it is not His blood?" *(Lib.* iv. *regul. Cat.)* and in another place: "Bread and wine which before the invocation of the most Holy Trinity were only bread and wine, become after this invocation the body and blood of Christ." *(Cat. myst.* i.)

What can the unbelievers say to this old testimony? Do they know the truth better than those apostles who themselves saw and heard Jesus at the Last Supper, and who taught their disciples that which they had seen and heard? All Christian antiquity proves their error!

giving them His body and blood itself; and if any one denies, that the holy Eucharist really, truly, and substantially contains the body and blood, the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, therefore the whole Christ, and asserts, that it is only a sign or figure without virtue, let him be anathema."

Did Christ institute this Sacrament for all time?

Yes, for when He had promised that the bread which He would give, was His flesh for the life of the world (*John* vi. 52.), and had said expressly that whosoever did not eat His flesh and drink His blood, would not have life in him, He, at the Last Supper, by the words: Do this for a commemoration of me (*Luke* xii. 19.), gave to the apostles and their successors, the priests, the power to receive it and administer it as a soul-food, which power the apostles and their successors, the priests, have always exercised (i. *Cor.* x. 16.), and will exercise to the end of the world.

How long after the change does Christ remain present under the appearance of bread and wine?

As long as the appearances remain; this was always the faith of the Church; therefore in the Church's early days when she was tried in the fire of persecution after the sacrifice, the sacred body of our Lord was taken home by the Christians to save the mystery from the pagans; at home they preserved it, and received it by their own hands, as testified to by the holy fathers of the Church Justin, Cyprian, Basil, and others. But when persecution had ceased, and the Church was permitted to profess the faith openly, and without hinderance, the blessed Sacrament was kept, in the Churches, enclosed in precious vessels (ciborium, remonstrance, or ostensorium) made for the purpose; and in later times it was also exposed, on solemn occasions, for public adoration.

Do we Catholics adore bread when we pay adoration to the blessed Sacrament in the ciborium, or remonstrance, or tabernacle?

No; we do not adore bread, for there is no bread there, but the most sacred body and blood of Christ, who, in the form of bread is truly present. Whereever Christ is, adoration is due Him, as by angels so by men. St. Augustine says: "No one partakes this body until he has first adored it, and we not only do not sin when we adore it, but would sin if we did not adore it." And the Council of Trent excommunicates those who assert, that it is not allowable to adore Christ, the only begotten Son of God, in the blessed Sacrament. How unjust are those unbelievers who sneer at this adoration, when it has never entered into the mind of any Catholic to adore the external appearances in this Sacrament, but the Saviour hidden under the appearances; and how grievously do those indifferent Catholics sin who show Christ so little veneration in this Sacrament, and so seldom adore Him if at all!

What are the external signs of this Sacrament?

The forms of bread and wine, that is, their taste, their shape, their color; but the substance of the bread and wine is by consecration changed into the real body and blood of Christ, and only appearances of bread and wine remain, and are observable by the senses.

Where and by whom is this consecration effected?

This consecration is effected on the altar during the holy Sacrifice of the Mass (therefore the name Sacrament of the Altar), when the priest, not in his own name, but in the name and by the power of Christ, pronounces over the bread and wine the words which Christ Himself pronounced when He instituted this holy Sacrament. St. Ambrose very beautifully writes of this: "When it comes to this that the Sacrament is to be accomplished, the priest no longer uses his own words, but Christ's words, therefore Christ's words consummate the Sacrament."

Is Christ present under each form?

Christ is really and truly present under both forms, present in divinity and humanity, body and soul, flesh and blood. This is especially grounded on St. Paul's words: Knowing that Christ rising again from the dead, dieth now no more. (*Rom.* vi. 9.) Then as Christ dies no more, and as a living body cannot be living without soul and blood, nor with the blood separated from the body, it follows from the real presence of Christ, that He is entirely present under each of the forms, and the Council of Trent therefore says: "Whoever denies that in the awe inspiring Sacrament of the Eucharist the whole Christ is present in both of the forms, in each part of each form, where a separation has taken place, let him be anathema."

Then no matter how many receive this Sacrament, does each one receive Christ?

Yes, for each one of the apostles received Christ entirely, and if God by His omnipotence can cause it so, that all men and each individual man can at the same instant rejoice in the sun's light, and enjoy it in its entirety, and if He could make one and the same voice to resound in the ears of all the listeners, is He not able to give the body of Christ whole and entire to as many as wish to receive it?

Is it necessary, that this Sacrament should be received in both forms?

No, for as it has already been said, Christ is present wholly, with flesh and blood, humanity and divinity, body and soul, in each of the forms. Christ promises eternal life to the recipient of one form only, when He says: If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever, and the bread that I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world. (*John* vi. 52.) The first Christians, in times of persecution, received this Sacrament under

the form of bread secretly in their houses. Though in earlier times, the faithful, like the priests, received the chalice, it was not strictly required, and the Church for important reasons has since ordered the reception of Communion under but one form, and this because by the great crowding of the people to holy Communion, there was danger that the blood of our Lord might be spilled, and thus dishonored; because as the blessed Sacrament must always be ready for the sick, it was feared that the form of wine might be injured by being long kept; because many cannot endure the taste of wine; because in some countries there is lack of wine, and it can be obtained only at great cost and with much difficulty, and finally, in order to refute the error of those who denied, that Christ is entirely present under each form.

As the Church for important reasons has made this regulation, she can also change it, but she must always condemn the error of those who assert, that under the form of bread is contained the bloodless body, and under the form of wine the lifeless blood of Christ; for Christ, living and reigning over death, has no dead, bloodless body, no lifeless blood.

What are the effects of the reception of holy Communion?

The graces of this most holy Sacrament, are, as the Roman Catechism says, immeasurable; it is the fountain of all grace, for it contains the Fountain and Author of all Sacraments, Christ our Lord, from whom as from a fountain flows into the Sacraments all they have of good and perfect. According to the doctrine of the Church, there are six special effects of grace produced by this Sacrament in those who worthily receive it. It unites the recipient of it with Christ, which Christ plainly shows when He says: He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me and I in him (*John* vi. 57.); whence the name Communion, Union, of which St. Leo writes: "The participation of the body and soul of Christ transforms us into that which we receive," and from this union with Christ, our Head, arises also a nearer union with our brethren and sisters in Christ, into one body. (i. *Cor.* x. 17.) It preserves and increases sanctifying grace, which is the spiritual life of the soul, for our Saviour says: He that eateth me, the same also shall live by me. (*John* vi. 58.) It diminishes in us the threefold evil concupiscence and strengthens us against the temptations of the devil. St. Bernard says: "This holy Sacrament produces two effects in us, it diminishes sensation in small sins, it removes the full consent in grievous sins; if any of you feel not so often now the harsh emotion of anger, of envy, or impurity, you owe it to the body and blood of the Lord;" and St. Chrysostom: "When we communicate worthily, we return from the table, like fiery lions, terrible to the devils." It causes us to perform good works with strength and courage; for he who

abides in Christ, and Christ in him, bears much fruit. (*John* xv.) It effaces venial sin, and preserves from mortal sin, as St. Ambrose says: "This daily bread is used as a help against daily weakness;" and as by the enjoyment of this holy Sacrament, we are made in a special manner the property, the lambs of Christ, which He Himself nourishes with His own heart's blood, He does not permit us to be taken out of His hands; but this only when we cooperate with the Saviour's grace, by prayer, vigilance, and contest. It brings us to a glorious resurrection and to eternal happiness; for he who communicates worthily, possesses Him who is the resurrection and the life (*John* xi. 25.), who has said: He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up in the last day. (*John* vi. 55.) He has therefore in Christ a pledge, that he will rise in glory and live for ever. If the receiving of this Sacrament produces such great results, how frequently, with what sincere desire should we hasten to enjoy this sweetest food of heaven, this fountain of all grace! The first Christians received it daily, and St. Augustine says: "Daily receive, what daily benefits!" and St. Cyril: "The baptized may know that they remove themselves far from eternal life, when they remain a long time from Communion." Ah, whence comes, in our days, the indifference, the weakness, the impiety of so many Christians but from the neglect and unworthy reception of Communion! My Christian, close not your ears to Jesus' voice which invites you so tenderly to His banquet: Come to me all you who are heavily burdened and I will refresh you. Go often, very often to Him; but when you go to Him, do not neglect to prepare for His worthy reception, and you will soon feel its effects in your soul, and you will find all that has been said of it to be true.

In what does the worthy preparation for this holy Sacrament consist?

The worthy preparation of the soul consists: in purifying ourselves by a sincere confession from all grievous sins; for one who receives holy Communion while in mortal sin, draws down upon himself, as the apostle says, judgment and condemnation; and in approaching the holy table with deepest humility, sincere love, and fervent desire. The worthy preparation of the body consists in fasting from twelve o' clock, midnight, before receiving Communion, and in coming properly dressed to the Lord's banquet.

The holy Sacrament of the Altar is preserved in the tabernacle, in front of which a light is kept burning, day and night, partly to show that Christ, the light of the world, is here present, partly that we may bear in mind that every Christian congregation should contain in itself the light of faith, the flame of hope, the warmth of divine love, and the fire of true devotion, by a

pious life manifesting and consuming itself, like a light, in the service of God. Do you believe, my Christian, as a Christian you must believe, that under the appearance of bread Christ is really present in the tabernacle, and that He is your Redeemer, your Saviour, your Lord and King, the best friend and lover of your soul, whose pleasure it is to dwell among the children of men? then it is your duty to often visit Him in this most holy Sacrament, and offer Him your homage and adoration. "It is certain," says St. Alphonsus Ligouri, "that next to the enjoyment of this holy Sacrament in Communion, the adoration of Jesus in this Sacrament, is the best and most pleasing of all devotional exercises, and of the greatest advantage to us." Hesitate not, therefore, to practise this devotion, from this day renounce intercourse with others, and go for at least half or a quarter of an hour to the Church, to entertain yourself there with Christ. Know that the time which you spend in this way, will be of the greatest consolation to you in the hour of death and through all eternity. Visit Jesus not only in the Church, but also fail not to accompany and adore Him when carried in processions, or to sick persons. You will thus show your Lord the homage due to Him, gather great merits for yourself, and have the sure hope, that Christ will one day repay you a hundredfold.

NOTE. The blessed Sacrament as a Sacrifice, and the holy Mass and its ceremonies, are treated upon towards the end of this book.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

ORIGIN OF THIS FESTIVAL.

After many devoted souls had venerated the sacred heart of Jesus, with sincere devotion, in the solitude of quiet life, as is seen from the lives of St. Augustine, St. Bernard, Bonaventura, Thomas of Aquine, Francis de Sales, Ignatius, St. Clara, St. Gertrude, Mechtildis, Catharine of Sienna, Theresa, and others, the divine Saviour willed that His heart's infinite love should be recognized by all men, and be kindled in cold hearts by a new fire of love. For this end He made use of a feeble, obscure instrument, that all the world might know, that the devotion to His loving heart, previously almost entirely unknown, was His own work. This instrument was one unregarded by the world, but who shone before God in all the radiance of the most sublime virtues, the nun Margaret Alacoque, of the order of the Visitation of Mary, at Paray, in Burgundy. To this His pure bride, whom He had

made His useful instrument by the most severe and constant exercise of humility and obedience, the Saviour several times appeared showing her His loving heart, placed as on a throne, surrounded by flames, transparent as crystal, with rays brighter than the sun; the wound which He has received on the cross when His side was pierced, was plainly seen; it was bound with thorns, and above it in the midst of mounting flames shone the sign of love—the cross.

When she one day during the octave of Corpus Christi was wrapt, as was her custom, in deep devotion before the blessed Sacrament, the divine Saviour again appeared to her, showed her His loving heart, and said: "See this heart which has so loved men, that it has spared nothing, has exhausted and consumed itself in order to show its love for them. Instead of gratitude, I receive from the greatest number of them only ingratitude by their contempt, irreverence, sacrilege, and coldness to me in this Sacrament of love. And what still more pains me, those very hearts which are consecrated to me, act in the same manner towards me. Therefore, I require you to have the first Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi appointed a special festival, to honor my heart by solemn acts of reparations, and that Communion be received on this day in satisfaction for the awful abuse with which it has been treated during the time of its exposition on the altar. I promise you, that my heart will become, as it were larger, to shower a more abundant fulness of divine love upon those who show honor to it themselves, and cause others to pay it homage."

Margaret obeyed, but found everywhere the greatest opposition, actually sneers and persecution, even from her sister in religion, until finally, with the aid of her divine spouse, she succeeded as mistress of novices, in bringing the young novices to the veneration of the sacred heart of Jesus. But this did not content her zeal; although opposition continued, she strove to fulfil the command of Jesus, who assisted her, by at last changing the hardened hearts of the nuns and inflaming them with the same love of His sacred heart. The devotion spread from there to the adjoining dioceses, where confraternities in honor of the sacred heart of Jesus arose, and Pope Clement XIII., after causing the strictest investigation to be made, commanded the Festival of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to be observed throughout the Catholic Church, on the first Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi.

ON DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

I. Object of this Devotion.

BY the sacred heart of Jesus must be understood not the lifeless heart, separated from the body of Christ, but the tender, loving heart of the God-Man, the home of all His emotions, the fountain of all His virtues, and the most touching embodiment of

His infinite love for man. The Catholic Church, in like manner, sets apart certain festivals with appropriate Mass and office, in honor of the cross, of our Lord's sacred blood and wounds, that our devotion to the Redeemer may be rendered still more intense by the contemplation of these objects, for Jesus has shed His blood for us, has received wounds for us which He retained even after His resurrection, as eternal signs of His immense love for man, has taken them with Him to heaven, and will show them to us on the judgment day. How much more should our Saviour's sacred heart itself be the object of our devotion, since all thoughts, sentiments, and emotions of this most loving heart aim only at our salvation, and since it is always ready to receive truly penitent sinners, to forgive them, again to turn His love to them, and make them sharers in eternal bliss.

Therefore the saints have from the first encouraged a tender devotion to this most sacred heart, as already mentioned. "Longinus," says St. Augustine, "opened the side of Jesus with His spear, in it I enter, and securely rest." "O how good," exclaims St. Bernard, "how lovely to take up my abode in this heart! In this temple, in this sanctuary, before this ark of the covenant, I will adore and praise the name of the Lord, and say with the prophet: I have found in the heart of Jesus, my king, my brother, my friend." "Believe me, O blinded men," says St. Bonaventura, "if you knew how to enter by His sacred wounds into the interior of Jesus, you would there find not only a wonderful sweetness for your soul, but even sweet repose for your body. And if there even the body finds rest, how great, think you, must be the sweetness which the spirit there enjoys, if through these wounds we become united to the sacred heart of Jesus!" And St. Peter Damian says: "In this adorable heart we find the weapons with which to defend ourselves against our enemies, a cure for our ills, powerful help against temptations, the sweetest consolation in suffering, and the purest joy in this valley of tears."

St. Mechtild and St. Gertrude found themselves transported in an especial manner by the tenderness of this adorable heart, to ardent devotion to it, and Gertrude, enlightened by the Spirit of God, spoke these prophetic words: "The Lord retained until these late centuries the devotion to His sacred heart, as a last effort of His divine love." We have already seen how these words have been verified in the pious Margaret. O would that Jesus' great desire that all men might know and love His sacred heart, might be accomplished in us all!

II. Excellence of this Devotion.

It is, says the venerable P. Simon Gourdan:

1) The most sacred devotion, for by it, man venerates the holiest of Christ's heart, by which He has sanctified the

Church, glorified His Heavenly Father, and presented Himself to us as the perfect model of the most exalted sanctity.

2) The oldelst devotion of the holy Church, which, instructed by the great St. Paul, has at all times recognized the munificence of the sacred heart of Jesus.

3) The most approved devotion, for the holy Scriptures everywhere exhort us, to renew our hearts by changing our lives, rendering them contrite by true penance, inflaming them with the fire of divine love, and adorning them by the exercise of all virtue. Therefore a new heart is promised on which to remodel our heart. That heart can be no other than the heart of Jesus, which is given us as an example of all virtue, and which we must imitate, if we wish to be saved.

4) The most perfect devotion, for it is the source of all other devotions; for the heart of Jesus is that inexhaustible treasury, from which the Mother of God and all the other saints have drawn their graces, their life, their virtues, and all spiritual blessings. Filled from this treasury, other servants of God have instituted different devotions.

5) The most useful devotion, for in it we have the Fountain of Life itself before our eyes, from which we can draw directly, and increase in all virtue, if we have this divine heart continually before us, honor it, consider its holy desires, and seek to imitate it.

6) The devotion most pleasing to Christ, for by it we honor God, as Christ requires, in spirit and in truth, because we adore the interior power of God, seeking to please His heart. Finally,

7) the most necessary devotion, for its result is that we become intimately connected as members with Jesus, our Head, that we live by and after His spirit, and become one body with Christ, that we have only one heart and soul with Christ, and become one with Him, which is the aim of all devotions.

Because this devotion is of such importance, we cannot recommend it often enough to all who are anxious for their soul's salvation. Every person may certainly cultivate this devotion for himself, and venerate the heart of Jesus, but there is a greater blessing when pious souls unite in a fraternity, and make the devotion together. In the year 1726 there existed more than three hundred such confraternities, and they are now spread throughout all Catholic countries. Do not delay, then, O Christian soul, to practise this devotion, and to honor the divine heart of Jesus, unite with others; because in this most blessed heart all men find their reconciliation, the pious their assurance, sinners their hope, the oppressed their comfort, the sick their relief, those who are fighting their strength, the dying their refuge, and the chosen ones their special joy and bliss.

The Introit of this day's Mass reads: He will have mercy according to the multitude of his mercies: for he hath not willingly afflicted nor cast off the children of men: the Lord is good to them that hope in him, to the soul that seeketh him. Allel. Allel. The mercies of the Lord I will sing for ever: to generation and generation. (*Ps.* lxxxviii. 1.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, almighty God, that we who, glorying in the most Sacred Heart of Thy beloved Son, celebrate the singular benefits of His love towards us, may rejoice equally in their operation and their fruit.

LESSON. (*Isai.* xii. 1—6.) I will give thanks to thee, O Lord, for thou wast angry with me; thy wrath is turned away, and thou hast comforted me. Behold, God is my Saviour; I will deal confidently, and will not fear; because the Lord is my strength, and my praise, and he is become my salvation. You shall draw waters with joy out of the Saviour's fountains: and you shall say in that day: Praise ye the Lord, and call upon his name: make his works known among the people: remember that his name is high. Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath done great things: shew this forth in all the earth. Rejoice, and praise, O thou habitation of Sion: for great is he that is in the midst of thee, the Holy One of Israel.

EXPLANATION. The words of this lesson are a hymn of praise for the liberation of the Jews from the hands of their enemies, and at the same time a prophecy of the coming redemption from sin and death, of all mankind through Christ. Man will, then, draw waters with joy, says the prophet, from the Saviour's fountains. These fountains are the graces which Jesus has gained on the cross for us, but especially, as says St. Augustine, the holy Sacraments of Baptism and Communion, which flow to the Church from our Saviour's opened side. We should rejoice on account of these graces, and especially on account of this that the Holy One of Israel, that is, Christ, the Son of God, dwells in the midst of Sion, that is, in the Catholic Church, in the blessed Sacrament, to remain there to the end of the world. – O let us often approach this everflowing fountain of all grace, the holy Sacrament of the Altar, and let us draw with confidence consolation, help, and strength from this fountain of love.

GOSPEL. (*John* xix. 31—35.) Then the Jews (because it was the parasceve), that the bodies might not remain upon

the cross on the sabbath-day (for that was a great sabbath-day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. The soldiers, therefore, came: and they broke the legs of the first, and of the other that was crucified with him. But after they were come to Jesus, when they saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers with a spear opened his side, and immediately there came out blood and water. And he that saw it, hath given testimony, and his testimony is true.

EXPLANATION. According to the Jewish law a criminal was not to be executed, nor the body of one left to remain in the place of execution, on the Sabbath day; it was for this reason that the Jews asked Pilate, the governor, to have the bodies of Christ and the two thieves buried. Before this could be done, the bones of the crucified, according to the Roman law, had to be broken with iron clubs. The soldiers did so to the two thieves, who were yet alive; but when they came to Jesus and found Him dead, one of them, Longinus, opened the Saviour's side with a spear, as was foretold by the prophet.

But Jesus had His most sacred heart opened to atone and efface those sins of men which originate in the heart, as Christ Himself says (*Matt.* xv. 19.): From the heart cometh forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies; also to show us the immense love with which He has loved us from the first, and to which the spear, so to speak, was to point to us; to let us see that nothing was too dear for Him to give to us, when He even shed the last drop of His heart's blood for our salvation; to make, as it were, a place of refuge in His heart for us, as St. Augustine says: "The evangelist choose his words; he does not say, the soldiers pierced or wounded His side, but opened it, as if to open for us the door of life, from which flow the Sacraments of the Church, without which there can be no access to that life which is the true life." As often, then, as a temptation arises, or trouble depresses us, let us take refuge in that place, and dwell there, until the tempest is over; as says the prophet (*Is.* ii. 10.): Enter thou into the rock, and hide thyself in the pit. Who is the rock but Christ, and what the pit but His wound?

AN OFFERING OF ONE'S SELF TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

[An indulgence of one hundred days is gained by saying this prayer with true contrition, before a picture of the sacred heart of

Jesus, and a plenary indulgence by saying it every day for a month, and on some one day of the month confessing, communicating, and praying in union with the Church's intention.]

O Jesus, most worthy of love! I gratefully offer Thee my heart in compensation for my great unfaithfulness, and consecrate myself wholly and forever to Thy service, purposing, with Thy grace no more to offend Thee. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

INTROIT: The Lord hath become my protector, and set me at large: he has saved me, because he loved me. (*Ps.* xvii.) I will love thee, O Lord, my strength: the Lord is my support, my refuge, and my deliverer. Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant us, O Lord, both a constant love and fear of Thy holy name: since Thou never withdrawest Thy protection from those, whom Thou solidly groundest in Thy love. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (i. *John* iii. 13—18.) DEARLY BELOVED: Wonder not if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not, abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer. And you know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in himself. In this we have known the charity of God, because he hath laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. He that hath the substance of this world, and shall see his brother in need, and shut up his bowels from him: how doth the charity of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word, nor in tongue, but in deed, and in truth.

EXPLANATION. People who are really pious, have always something to suffer from the wicked world, as Jesus foretold, but they do not cease to love their persecutors as their best friends, and are ready, if necessary, to give their life for their enemies, as did Christ. Thus should all Christians act; for the love of our neighbor and even of our enemies, is a universal command, a law that binds all; it is the life of the soul. Hatred deprives the

soul of this life, and makes man a murderer, because hatred is the beginning of murder, and often ends in murder or homicide. By love we know the true Christians. (*John* xiii. 35.) St. John even considers love the certain sign of being chosen for eternal life, when he says: We know, we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. Alas! how few will be chosen, among the Christians of to-day, because there is so little love among them! With empty compliments, assurances of friendship, &c., love appears only in words, only on the tongue, and such idle, ephemeral, worthless love is found everywhere in this world; but love which is love in truth and reality, which shows charity to the suffering, how rare it is! and yet only to this love is promised eternal life, because it alone rests on the love of God.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xiv. 16—24.) At that time: Jesus spoke this parable to the Pharisees: A certain man made a great supper, and invited many, and he sent his servant at the hour of supper to say to them that were invited, that they should come, for now all things are ready. And they began all at once to make excuse. The first said to him: I have bought a farm, and must needs go out and see it: I pray thee, hold me excused. And another said: I have bought five yokes of oxen, and I go to try them: I pray thee, hold me excused. And another said: I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. And the servant returning told these things to his lord. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant: Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the feeble, and the blind, and the lame.—And the servant said: Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said to the servant: Go out into the high ways and hedges; and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. But I say unto you, that none of those men that were invited, shall taste of my supper.

What is to be understood by this great supper?

The Church militant on earth, in which the true doctrine of Jesus and His most precious flesh and blood are given as food to those who belong to her, and also the Church triumphant in heaven, in which God Himself, in the beatific vision, is the nourishment given. This supper is called great, because God Himself has founded the Church; because the Church embraces heaven and

earth, hence many belong and will belong to her; and because having ended the contest on earth, she will last forever in heaven. There the saints of God will enjoy the Highest Good for all eternity, and will have nothing to wish for, since all their desires will be there realized. O, what happiness it is, that we are invited even now to this supper, are even now guests, and are nourished as such here with the teachings of Christ, and with His most sacred flesh and blood.

Who is it that prepares the supper?

It is Christ, the God-Man, who for our benefit has not only instituted His Church, to which He has entrusted His doctrine and the Sacrament of His flesh and blood, but has gained eternal salvation for us by His passion and death, and who has, first by the prophets, who foretold Him and His divine kingdom, and

afterwards through His apostles, invited us, and is ever inviting us, through the successors of the apostles, to His supper.

Who are they who excuse themselves?

They are principally the Jews who bound by pride and avarice to earthly possessions, and blinded by the pleasures of the world, did not recognize Jesus, and came not to His Church. By him who said, he had bought a farm, are meant in general those who by constant anxieties about the possession of earthly goods and the riches of this world, become indifferent to eternal salvation. By him who had bought five yokes of oxen, is to be understood that sort of busy men, who are so burdened with work and business that they find no time to work for heaven, for they even appropriate Sundays and festivals to their worldly affairs. By him who had taken a wife, and says, without ceremony, that he cannot come, the carnal, impure men are represented, who have rendered themselves by their lusts, incapable of spiritual and heavenly joys. Since all these different sorts of persons do not wish to have part in the heavenly banquet, God has excluded them and called others.

Who are meant by the others, the poor, the feeble, the blind, and the lame, who are called after the first invitations?

The humble and submissive Jews, the publicans, also the Samaritans and the gentiles, who did not reject Jesus and His doctrine as did the proud, highminded, carnal Pharisees and scribes, to whom Jesus spoke in this parable. The former faithfully received Him, entered His Church, and became participators in eternal happiness. This is daily repeated, because God excludes from the kingdom of heaven those proud, avaricious, and carnal Christians who are ever invited by His servants, the priests, to the enjoyment of holy Communion, but who reject the invitation, and, on the contrary, welcomes the poor, despised people, the penitent sinners, by separating them, through the inspirations of His grace, and by the adversities which He sends them, from love of the world. Thus, in a measure, He forces them to take part in the spiritual joys of a sincerely pious life in His Church on earth, and in the heavenly bliss of His Church in heaven.

SUPPLICATION. I thank Thee, O most merciful Jesus, that Thou hast called me to Thy Church, permitting me so often to share in the banquet of Thy love, and that by Thy sufferings and death Thou hast obtained the joys of heaven for me. Force me to Thy pleasure, compel me to it by temporal trials, that by the use of these graces I may gain, that my place may not some day be given to another.

MORAL LESSONS CONCERNING THE VICE OF IMPURITY.

I have taken a wife, and therefore cannot come. (*Luke* xiv. 20.)

From this foolish excuse it would seem as if married life were an obstacle to prevent arriving at the heavenly banquet, although lawful, chaste, Christian marriage is, on the contrary, a means of eternal salvation for those to whom the gift of continency is not given. The excuse of this married person was not grounded in his station of life, but in his inordinate inclination for carnal pleasures, which renders the man who gives way to it, unfit for spiritual or heavenly things, for the sensual man perceiveth not the things that are of the Spirit of God. (i. *Cor.* ii. 14.)

Unfortunate indeed are they who suffer themselves to be carried away by their sensual lusts, who give away the priceless jewel of chastity and purity of heart, which makes man equal to the angels (*Matt.* xxii. 30.), who for a momentary enjoyment of sinful pleasure lose that white and precious garment in which chaste souls, who preserve it unstained, will shine for ever in heaven before the face of God! And what benefit does the impure man derive from the gratification of vile lust? He gains nothing but intolerable disgust when the sin is consummated, the torment of a remorseful conscience, the anger and contempt of God, and, unless he repents, eternal torments in hell; for the apostle says: Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor the effeminate shall possess the kingdom of God. (i. *Cor.* vi. 9, 10.) It is seen from the examples of the Old Law, how much God hates and abominates the sins of impurity; for why did God regret having created man? (*Gen.* vi. 6.) Why did He destroy all except a very few, by a universal deluge? (*Gen.* vi. 17.) Why did He lay the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha in ashes by a rain of fire and brimstone? (*Gen.* xix.) Why did He punish the two brothers, Her and Onan, by a sudden death? (*Gen.* xix. 38.) Why did He permit the whole tribe of Benjamin to be extirpated? (*Judges* xx.) Why? But because of these detestable sins of impurity. And is this vice not indeed detestable, and an object of the just wrath of God? By these sins an impure man disgraces his body which should be a member of Christ, a temple of the Holy Ghost; he disgraces his soul, the image of God, purified and purchased by the precious blood of Christ, and lowers himself beneath the animal which, devoid of intellect, follows its instinct; he weakens the power of his body and soul, and ruins his health; he loses the respect of the good, scandalizes his fellowmen, voluntarily separates himself from the communion of saints, deprives himself of the sanctifying grace of God and participation in the merits of Jesus and His saints, and, if he continues like an animal to wallow in this vice, he finally falls into such blindness and hard-

heartedness, that eternal truths, death, judgment, hell, and eternity no longer make any impression upon him; the most abominable crimes of impurity he considers as trifles, as human weaknesses, no sin at all. He is therefore but seldom or never converted, because the evil habit has become his second nature, which he can no longer overcome without an extraordinary grace of God. This God seldom gives, because the impure man generally despises ordinary means and graces, and therefore despairs and casts himself into the pool of eternal fire, where the worm dies not, and where with Satan and his angels the impure shall be for ever tormented.

Suffer not yourself to be deceived, my Christian, by the words "Love and friendship", with which it is sought to cover this vice, and make it appear a weakness clinging to man. This impure love is a fire which has its origin in hell, and will in hell eternally torment the bodies in which it has prevailed. That which God so much detests and so punishes, certainly cannot be a trifle, a human weakness! Imprint deeply in your heart, that all impure thoughts, desires, looks, to which you consent, all impure words, songs, exposures, touches, jokes, and such things, are great sins which exclude you from the kingdom of heaven, into which nothing defiled can enter. Remember that he who looks at a woman with desire, has already, as Christ says, committed adultery in his heart. (*Matt.* v. 28.) We must, then, carefully guard against "such trifles" as the wicked world calls them, if we do not wish to expose ourselves to the greatest danger of losing our souls. Although it is certainly difficult for an impure person to be converted, yet he should not despair. God does not cast away even the greatest sinner; Jesus forgave the adulteress in the temple, and forgave and received Mary Magdalen. But such a one must make use of the proper means to prevent a relapse, and to regain the grace of God. Of these means those also may make use, who have not defiled themselves by the sin of impurity. These means are:

1. Constant prayer. The wise king advises to this: As I knew that I could not otherwise be continent, except God gave it, I went to the Lord and besought him. (*Wisd.* viii. 21.) 2. Mortification of the flesh by fasting and abstinence; for Jesus says of this kind of impure spirits, that they can in no other way be cast out but by prayer and fasting. (*Matt.* xvii. 20.) 3. The frequent meditation on the four last things, and on the bitter sufferings of our Lord; for there is, says St. Augustine, no more powerful and effective means against the heat of lust than the death of the Redeemer. 4. The quiet consideration of the temporal and eternal evils which follow this vice, as already described. 5. The love and veneration of the Blessed Virgin who is the mother of beautiful love and refuge of all sinners, of whom

St. Bernard says, "that no one has ever invoked her in his necessities without being heard." 6. The careful training of the eyes. The pious Job made a covenant with his eyes, that he would not so much as look upon a virgin. (*Job.* xxxi. 1.) 7. The avoidance of evil occasions, especially the avoidance of intercourse with persons of the other sex. "Remember," says St. Jerome, "that a woman drove out the inhabitants of paradise, and that you are not holier than David, not stronger than Samson, not wiser than Solomon, who all fell by wrong intercourse." 8. The avoidance of idleness; for idleness, says the proverb, is the beginning of all evil. 9. The quick driving away of all bad thoughts by often pronouncing the names of Jesus and Mary, which, as St. Alphonsus Ligouri says, have the special power of driving away wrong thoughts. 10. The frequent use of the holy Sacraments of Penance and of the Altar. This last remedy in particular, is a certain cure if we make known to our confessor, and always if possible to the same one, our weaknesses, and use precisely the remedies he prescribes. The Scripture says in regard to holy Communion, that it is the grain from which virgins spring, and the table which God has prepared against all temptations that annoy us.

THE CHURCH'S PRAYER FOR CONTINENCY. Inflame, O Lord, our veins and hearts with the fire of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may serve Thee with pure bodies, and please Thee with clean hearts. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

T the Introit of Mass pray with the priest with a confiding and humble heart: Look thou upon me, and have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am alone and poor: see my abjection and my labour, and forgive me all my sins, O my God. (*Ps.* xxiv.) To thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul: In thee, O my God, I place my trust: let me not be ashamed. Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, the Protector of those who hope in Thee, without whose aid nothing is strong, nothing holy: increase Thy mercy towards us; that under Thy direction and conduct, we may so pass through the blessings of this life, as not to lose those which are eternal. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (i. *Peter* v. 6—11.) Dearly beloved: Be you humbled under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in the time of visitation. Casting all your care upon him, for he hath care of you. Be sober and watch: because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist ye, strong in faith; knowing that the same affliction befalls your brethren who are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us into his eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little, will himself perfect you, and confirm and establish you. To him be glory and empire for ever and ever. Amen.

EXPLANATION. As God resists the proud, but gives His grace to the humble, urges St. Peter us to humble ourselves, being aware of our sinfulness and nothingness, before the powerful hand of God, who holds with three fingers the whole weight of our earth; he admonishes to distrust ourselves, think nothing of ourselves, then will we be elevated at the time of visitation, that is, at God's last judgment. This necessary humility shows itself in us by our giving ourselves and all our cares up to the almighty providence of God, who, as St. Augustine says, takes care for one man as for all, and for all as for one. We should not fail, however, to be sober and watchful, to keep at a distance and not think ourselves secure from the lusts of the world. For the devil like a lion seeking prey, and therefore ever on the watch, desires the ruin of our souls, tormenting us by temptations and afflictions, whom we should and can resist, however, by faithful confidence in God's help, all the more when we see how others suffer even as we, and when we consider the hope we have that Jesus will strengthen us during our trial, and crown us with eternal glory at its end, to whom be glory, and empire, for ever and ever.

MORAL LESSONS CONCERNING DRUNKENNESS.

Be sober and watch. (i. *Peter* v. 8.)

Sobriety is the mother of vigilance; intemperance, especially in regard to drinking, is the mother of sloth and many other vices, which cast many souls into the jaws of the devil who, like a hungry lion, goes about day and night seeking for prey. Woe, therefore, to those who because of their drunkenness live, as it were, in constant night and in the permanent sleep of sin! How will they feel when suddenly they are awakened by death from their sleep, and if they then find themselves laden, before the judgment of God, with innumerable sins which they knew not, nor wished to know! For who can count the sins committed in a

state of intoxication, sins for which the drunkard cares nothing, for which he has no contrition, and has not confessed, because he is generally in a state in which he has no reason and does not know, therefore, what he has thought, said, or done.

But will the divine Judge find no sin in such persons? Will He permit the shameful deeds committed while intoxicated, the curses, blasphemies, sneers, detractions, outrages, and scandals remain impunished? He, who demands an account of every idle word, will He demand no account of the time so evily spent, of the money so badly squandered, of households neglected, Church service unattended, education of children omitted, and of the other great sins committed? They will indeed excuse themselves, pleading that these sins were committed involuntarily, or as a joke, when they were intoxicated; that their intoxication was excusable, as they were not able to stand much.

But will God be content with such excuses? Will they not tend the more to their destruction? This is to be punished, this, that they took more than they could bear of the intoxicating drink, deprived themselves of the use of reason, and thus voluntarily made the occasion of all the sins they committed while in that state.

What, then, can they expect? Nothing less than the fate of the rich man in the gospel, who on account of his debaucheries was buried in hell, where his parched tongue receives during all eternity not one drop of water to cool it. (*Luke* xvi. 22.) Yes, this will be the place of those unconverted drunkards of whom St. Paul says, that they will not possess the kingdom of God. (i. *Cor.* vi. 10.) From this place of torment nothing but a true conversion will save them. But how rare and how difficult is the conversion of a drunkard, because with them as with the unchaste this habit becomes a second nature, and because they generally abuse the remedies: the holy Sacraments of Penance and the Altar.

This should certainly keep every one from the vice of drunkenness; but those who are not thus withheld, may consider the indecency, the disgrace, and the injury of this vice, which may perhaps better fill them with disgust for it.

How disgraceful it is that a man endowed with intellect and reason, created for heaven, should take to the beastly love of drink, degrading his mind, his intellectual spirit, the image of God, rendering it like the brute beasts, yes, even making it inferior to the animals. For what animal having taken enough, can be forced to take more than it can bear? "Are not the drunkards far worse than the animals?" says St. Chrysostom. Indeed yes, if only on account of their drunkenness, but far more because of the shameful position of their body, their manners, their speech, their behavior. How disgracefully naked lay Noah, although he was intoxicated without his own fault, exposed in his tent to the

ridicule of the impudent Cham! (*Gen.* xi. 21.) Even the heathen Spartans held as so disgraceful the vice of drunkenness, that they were in the habit of intoxicating a slave, and bringing him before their children that they might be disgusted with it.

Finally, that which should deter everybody from this vice, is its injuriousness. It ruins the body as well as the soul. By surfeiting many have perished (*Eccl.* xxxvii. 34.), and it has ruined the health of many more. Who hath woe? Whose father hath woe? Who hath contentions? Who fall into pits, who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes? Surely they that pass their time in wine, and study to drink off their cups. (*Prov.* xxiii. 29, 30.) Daily observation confirms this truth of Scripture, and the miserable old age, accompanied by innumerable weaknesses and frailties, of one given up to drink, is a sufficient testimony of the injuriousness of this vice.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xv. 1—10.) At that time: The publicans and sinners drew near unto him to hear him. And the Pharisees and Scribes murmured, saying: This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them. And he spoke to them this parable, saying: What man of you that hath a hundred sheep; and if he shall lose one of them, doth he not leave the ninety-nine in the desert, and go after that which was lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, lay it upon his shoulders rejoicing, and coming home call together his friends and neighbors, saying to them: Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost? I say to you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance. Or what woman having ten groats: if she lose one groat, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently, until she find it? And when she hath found it, call together her friends and neighbors, saying: Rejoice with me, because I have found the groat which I had lost? So I say to you, there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance.

What moved the sinners to approach Jesus?

The goodness and benevolence with which He met the penitent sinners. Do you also humbly and trustingly approach Him, and you may rest assured that, even if you are the greatest of sinners, you will receive grace and forgiveness.

What is Christ's meaning in the parable of the lost sheep and groat?

He expresses by this His desire for the salvation of the sinner, and His joy and that of all heaven when a sinner is converted. Moreover, He shows the Pharisees who in vain selfjustification avoided all intercourse with acknowledged sinners, and who murmured at the goodness of Jesus, that the sinner, being truly unhappy, deserves our compassion rather than our anger.

Why do the angels rejoice more over one sinner who does penance than over ninety-nine just?

Because the places of the fallen angels are thus refilled; because the angels see how the good God rejoices; because they find their prayers for the conversion of sinners granted, as St. Bernard says: "The tears of the penitents are wine for the

angels;" because, as St. Gregory says, "the true penitents are usually more zealous even than the innocent".

ASPIRATION. I have erred like a sheep that has lost its way; but I thank Thee, O Jesus, my good Shepherd, that Thou hast so carefully sought me by Thy inspirations, admonitions, and warnings, and dost now bring me back to true penance, that I may be a joy to the angels. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

Say at the Introit with the priest in great confidence: The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the protector of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? My enemies that trouble me, have themselves been weakened, and have fallen. If armies in camp should stand together against me, my heart shall not fear. (*Ps.* 26.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that the world, with regard to us, may be governed in peace by Thy providence, and Thy Church pay her devotions to Thee in tranquillity. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Rom.* viii. 18—23.) Brethren: I reckon that the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, that shall be revealed to us. For the expectation of the creature waiteth for the revelation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him that made it subject, in hope: Because the creature also itself shall be delivered from the servitude of corruption, into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that every creature groaneth, and travaileth in pain even till now. And not only it, but ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption of the sons of God, the redemption of our body in Christ Jesus our Lord.

INSTRUCTION. There is no greater consolation in crosses and afflictions, no more powerful strength to uphold the burdens of a pious and virtuous life, than the thought that all sufferings

are as nothing when compared with the coming glory of heaven, and that by a slight and momentary suffering in this life is obtained a superabundant happiness in the next. (ii. *Cor.* iv. 17.) Thus St. Augustine says: "Were we daily to suffer all torments, even for a short time the pains of hell, in order to see Christ and be numbered among His saints, would it not be worth all the misery to obtain such a great good, such great glory?"

ASPIRATION. Ah, Lord, when shall we be delivered from the miserable bondage of this life, and participate in that indescribable glory which Thou hast prepared for Thy children, where free from the misery and many temptations of this life, they enjoy eternal bliss. Enable us to see more and more into the misery of this life, that we may thus be urged to strive for freedom and glory in Thy kingdom. Amen.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* v. 1—11.) At that time: It came to pass, that when the multitude pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Genesareth. And he saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them and were washing their nets. And going up into one of the ships that was Simon's, he desired him to draw back a little from the land. And sitting he taught the multitudes out of the ship. Now when he had ceased to speak, he said to Simon: Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon, answering, said to him: Master, we have laboured all the night, and have taken nothing: but at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had done this, they enclosed a very great multitude of fishes and their net broke. And they beckoned to their partners that were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came and filled both the ships, so that they were almost sinking. Which when Simon Peter saw, he fell down at Jesus's knees, saying: Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was wholly astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken. And so were also James and John the sons of Zebedee, who were Simon's partners. And Jesus saith to Simon: Fear not: from henceforth thou shalt

catch men. And having brought their ships to land, leaving all things they followed him.

What are we to learn from the people who came to Christ to hear the word of God?

To listen with great zeal and interior desire to the word of God, because from it man receives the life of his soul (*Matt.* iv. 4.), and eternal happiness. (*Luke* xi. 28.)

Why did Christ teach from Peter's ship?

By this He showed, that pure and true doctrine is preached only from that Church of which Peter is the head (*John* xxi. 15.), which is here represented by Peter's ship. Although many storms of persecution have from the first arisen against the ship, the true Church, and will still arise against it, it will, as Christ has

promised, never be sunk. (*Matt.* xvi. 18.) From this ship Jesus still preaches through the successors of St. Peter, His vicar, through the bishops and priests, as His cooperators, with whom He has promised to remain to the end of the world. (*Matt.* xxviii. 20.)

Why was it that Peter and his assistants caught nothing all the night, and afterwards so much?

Because at first they trusted in themselves, and did not throw out their nets in the name of the Lord, that is, trusting in His blessing and assistance. "From this example," says St. Ambrose, "is seen how vain and fruitless is presumptuous confidence, how powerful, on the contrary, humility, since those who had previously labored without success, filled their nets at the mere word of the Redeemer." Let us learn from this our inability, that we should begin our work only with God, that is, with confidence in His help, and with the intention of working only for love of Him, for His honor. If we do so, the blessing of the Lord will not be lacking.

What is represented by the nets and the draught of fishes?

"The word of truth which, so to speak, forms the network of gospel preaching," says St. Ambrose, "with which the successors of the apostles, the bishops and priests, draw souls from the darkness of error, give them the light of truth, and take them from the depths of the abyss to raise them to heaven."

What is meant by the apostles' calling to their partners for help?

We are instructed by this that we should assist the preachers of the gospel, the priests, in the conversion of sinners by prayer, fasting, alms-deeds, and other good works, especially by good example, for this is a most meritorious work. (*James* v. 20.)

Why did Jesus choose poor and illiterate fishermen for His apostles?

That it might be seen that the founding and propagating of the holy Catholic Church is not the work of man, but of God; for how could it be possible, without the evident assistance of God, that poor illiterate fishermen could overthrow proud paganism, and bring nations to receive the doctrine of the crucified God-Man Jesus, who to the Jews was an abomination, to the gentiles a folly!

INSTRUCTION ON A GOOD INTENTION.

Master, we have laboured all the night, and have taken nothing: but at thy word I will let down the net.
(*Luke* v. 5.)

There are many people who by a special, but loving decree of God, yet unknown to us, seem to be born only for a miserably hard life, and who, with all this (which is greatly to be re-

gretted), have no hope of a reward in the next world, because they make no good use by a good intention of the wretchedness which God gives them for a ladder to heaven.

In what does a good intention consist?

In this that we perform all our works, even the smallest, all words and thoughts, in the name of God, that is, to His honor and in accordance with His most holy will; that we take all sufferings and afflictions cheerfully from His hand, and offer them in union with the passion of Jesus.

How should we make a good intention?

We should at once in the morning offer to the Lord, all the thoughts, words, and deeds, all the crosses and afflictions, all our steps during the day: 1. as a sacrifice of obligation, to pay to Him the due service, honor, and homage; 2. a sacrifice of thanksgiving, in gratitude for graces received; 3. a propitiatory sacrifice, to render some satisfaction to divine justice for our own and other's sins; 4. an impetratory sacrifice, to obtain, through the merits of Christ, new graces and gifts for ourselves and others. We must not forget however in the making of a good intention, to unite all our works with the merits of Jesus, by which alone they acquire worth and merit before God, and we must guard against losing the effect of the good intention, made in the morning, by impatience or sinful deeds, for a good intention cannot exist with sin. It is also very useful to put all our actions into the wounds of Jesus, offering them to God, by the hands of Mary, the blessed Mother of God, and it is advisable to frequently renew our good intention during the day, in some such words as these: "For the love of Thee, O Lord! For Thy sake! All in honor of God! With the intention I made this morning!" Endeavor to instruct the ignorant and those who cannot read concerning a good intention, and thus share in their good works.

What benefit is derived from a good intention?

As St. Anselm says, "it renders all works, even the smallest, golden and divine"; and St. Gregory: "it makes all thoughts, words, and deeds meritorious", and effects, that in the hour of death we, like the five wise virgins, can expect with joy the heavenly bridegroom, Jesus, and be richly rewarded by Him.

ASPIRATION. Incline my heart, O God, to Thy holy commands. Guard me, that I work not in the night of sin, and thus gain nothing by my works. Assist all pastors of souls, that by Thy divine will, they may win souls for Thy kingdom, and bring them to Thee.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

T the Introit ask God for help, and say with the priest: Hear, O Lord, my voice, with which I have cried to thee: be thou my helper; forsake me not, do not thou despise me, O God, my Saviour. (*Ps.* xxvi.) The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who hast prepared invisible good things for those that love Thee: pour forth into our hearts an affectionate love for thee: That loving Thee in all things and above all things, we may come to the enjoyment of Thy promises, which are above whatever we can desire.

EPISTLE. (i. *Peter* iii. 8—15.) DEARLY BELOVED: Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, being lovers of the brotherhood, merciful, modest, humble: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing: for unto this you are called, that you may inherit a blessing. "For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him decline from evil and do good: let him seek after peace, and pursue it: because the eyes of the Lord are upon the just, and his ears unto their prayers: but the countenance of the Lord against them that do evil things." And who is he that can hurt you, if you be jealous of good? But if also you suffer any thing for justice's sake, blessed are ye. And be not afraid of their fear, and be not troubled. But sanctify the Lord Christ in your hearts.

How can and how should we Christians sanctify the Lord in our hearts?

By appropriating and practising those virtues which Peter here recommends, and which he so exactly describes. For when we make these virtues our own and practise them, we honor Christ in a manner pleasing to Him, and we cause Him to be honored by others who, edified by our good example, are led better to understand Christ and His doctrine, and to follow Him also. Thus we not only honor and sanctify Christ in our hearts,

but also in others, and we make ourselves less unworthy of the grace and protection of God. Then if for piety's sake, we are persecuted by wicked men, we need not fear, because God is for us and will repay us with eternal happiness.

ASPIRATION. O good Saviour, Jesus Christ, grant me, that I may make Thy virtues, especially Thy humility, patience, mercy, and love, my own, and that I may practise them industriously, that I may glorify Thee, sanctify myself, and make myself worthy of Thy protection.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* v. 20—24.) AT THAT TIME: Jesus said to his disciples: Unless your justice exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter into the kingdom of hea-

ven. You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not kill. And whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say to you, that whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment. And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council. And whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there shalt remember that thy brother hath any thing against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go first to be reconciled to thy brother: and then come and offer thy gift.

What was the justice of the Pharisees?

It consisted merely in external works of piety, in the avoidance of those gross vices, which could not be kept concealed, and would have brought them to shame and disgrace. But in their hearts these Pharisees cherished evil, corrupt inclinations and desires, pride, envy, avarice, and planned malice and vengeance. Jesus, therefore, called them hypocrites, whited sepulchres, and St. John calls them a brood of vipers. True justice consists not only in external works of piety, that is, devotional works, but especially in a pure, sincere, wellmeaning feeling towards God and man; without this all works, however good, are only a shell without a kernel.

How is to be understood that which Christ here says of anger and invectives?

These words are as if Christ said: You have heard that murder was forbidden to your fathers in the desert, and that the murderer had to be given up to justice to be punished: but I say to you, whoever uncharitably becomes angry with his neighbor, shall be in danger of divine judgment, and more so he who with abusive words, such as Raca, Villain, gives bent to his anger, and especially he who in his anger against his neighbor, uses expression of contempt and insult, as fool, scoundrel, profligate, wretch. These three degrees of anger are punished by eternal fire in hell, but in different ways. These diverse methodes of punishment, however, as St. Augustine says, cannot be explained by sensible images.

Is all anger sinful?

No, anger is sinful only when we wish or try to inflict on our neighbor some evil to his body, honor, or property, or use such insulting words concerning him, that his name is badly hurt, and he becomes sad or excited. But when the mind is agitated, and renders us angry because of the vices and debaucheries, the crimes

and sins of others, when our office or the duties of our station demand that we watch over the sins of those under us, to punish them, and to make them better (as in the case of parents, teachers, and superiors), then anger is no sin. When one out of pure love of God, becomes irritated at the sins and vices of his fellowmen, like King David, or if one urged to wrong, repels the tempter with indignation, this is even a holy anger. Thus St. Gregory says: "It is to be understood, that anger created by impatience, is a very different thing from anger produced by a zeal for justice. One is caused by vice, the other by virtue." He, then, who becomes angry for justice's sake, commits no sin, but his conduct is holy and praiseworthy, for even our Lord was angry at those who bought and sold in the temple (*John* ii. 15.), Paul at the magician Elymas (*Acts* xiii. 8.), and Peter at the deceit of Ananias and Saphira. (*Acts* v. 3.) Anger, then, to be without sin, must proceed from true zeal for God's honor and the salvation of souls, by which we seek to prevent others from wrong and sin, and to make them better. But even in this respect, we must be careful to allow our anger no control over our reason, but to use it merely as a means of doing good, for we are often apt to take the sting of anger for holy zeal, when it is really nothing but egotism and ambition.

Why should we first go to be reconciled with our neighbor before bringing an offering to God, or doing some other good work?

Because no offering or other good work can be pleasing to God, while we are living in enmity with our neighbor, in hatred and quarrels; for by living thus we go entirely against God's will. This should be remembered by all Christians, who venture to go to Confession and holy Communion, without forgiving those who have offended them, and asking pardon of those whom they have offended. These must know that instead of receiving absolution for their sins, they make themselves, by an invalid confession, guilty of another sin, and eat their own judgment in holy Communion.

How should reconciliation be made with our neighbor?

It should be done quickly, because the apostle says: Let not the sun go down upon your anger. (*Eph.* iv. 26.) But if the person you have offended, is absent, says St. Augustine, and you cannot easily meet him, you are bound to be reconciled to him interiorly, that is, to humble yourself before God, to ask His forgiveness, making the firm resolution to be reconciled to your enemy as soon as possible. If he is accessible and not very distant, go to him, and ask his forgiveness; if he has offended you, forgive him from your heart. The reconciliation should be sincere, not simply apparent, for God sees into the heart; and permanent, for if it is not lasting, it may be questioned if it was ever sincere. On account of this command of Christ to be reconciled to our enemies before bringing sacrifice, it is that in old times at

Mass before holy Communion the faithful kissed each other, as even to this day do the priests and deacons, by which those who are present, are admonished to love one another with holy love, and to be perfectly reconciled with their enemies, before Communion.

ASPIRATION. O God, strike me not with the blindness of the Pharisees that, like them, I may seek to please man by my works, and thus be deprived of eternal reward. Banish from my heart all sinful anger, and give me a holy zeal in love, that I may be anxious only for Thy honor and for the salvation of my neighbor. Grant me also, that I may offend no one, willingly forgive those who have offended me, thus practising true Christian justice, and becoming agreeable to Thee.

MEANS TO PREVENT ANGER.

The first and most effectual preventive is humility; for as among the proud there are always discords and quarrels (*Prov.* xiii. 10.), so the humble, who think but little of themselves, are quiet, meek, and patient. And to be humble, meek, and patient, we have only to bring frequently before our minds the example of Christ, who, though altogether without sin, deceit never being found upon His lips (i. *Peter* ii. 22.), suffered such great contradictions from sinners, so many persecutions, scoffs, and sneers, and who taunted not in return, and through all His sufferings threatened vengeance to no one, and says to us with truth: Learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart. (*Matt.* xi. 29.) A very good preventive of anger is to prepare ourselves in the morning, think of what may happen to us during the day to incite us to anger, and then arm ourselves against it by a firm resolution to bear all with patience and silence, and when afterwards anything unpleasant occurs, let us think, "What will I effect by my anger? Can I change anything by it? Will I not even make myself ridiculous by it, and injure my health, besides?" (for experience as well as holy Scripture teaches, that anger shortens life. *Eccl.* xxx. 26.) The most necessary preventive of anger, finally, is fervent prayer for the grace of meekness and patience, for although it seems difficult and perhaps impossible to our nature to be patient, by the grace of God it can become not only possible, but easy.

INSTRUCTION ON SACRIFICE.

Offer thy gift. (*Matt.* v. 24.)

In its wider and more universal sense sacrifice comprehends all religious actions by which a rational being presents himself to God, to be united with Him; and in this sense prayer,

praising God, a contrite heart, charity to others, every good work, and observance of God's commandments are sacrifices. Thus the Holy Scriptures say: Offer up the sacrifice of justice and trust in the Lord. (*Ps.* iv. 6.) Offer to God the sacrifice of praise. (*Ps.* xlix. 14.) Sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit; a contrite and humble heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. (*Ps.* l. 19.) It is a wholesome sacrifice to take heed to the commandments, and to depart from all iniquity. (*Eccl.* xxxv. 2.) "Therefore," says St. Augustine, "every good work which is done to be united in sanctity with God, and to remain in Him, is a true sacrifice, because it refers to the end of all good, to God, by whom we can be truly happy." As often, then, as you humble yourself in prayer before the majesty of God, when you give yourself up to God, and when you make your will subject to His divine will, you bring a sacrifice to God; as often as you punish your body by continency, and your senses by mortification, you bring a sacrifice to God, because you offer them as instruments of justice (*Rom.* vi. 13.); as often as you subdue the evil concupiscence of the flesh, the perverted inclinations of your soul, deny yourself any worldly pleasure for the love of God, you bring a sacrifice to God. Such sacrifices you should daily offer to God; without such as these, all others have no value and do not please God, and such as these you can every moment make, for every moment you can love God, and think, speak, and act for the love of God.

Strive then, my Christian, to offer these pleasing sacrifices to God, the supreme Lord, and as you thus glorify Him, so will He one day reward you with unutterable glory.

[Concerning Sacrifice in its closer sense, especially the Sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross and its renewal in holy Mass, see the latter part of this book.]

INSTRUCTION FOR THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

THE Introit of this day's Mass is the prayer of a soul that trusts in God's powerful and merciful protection: The Lord is the strength of his people; the Protector of the Salvation of his Anointed. Save, O Lord, thy people, and bless thy inheritance, and govern them for ever. To thee, O Lord, will I cry out. O my God, be not silent: refuse not to answer me, lest I become like those who descend into the pit. (*Ps.* xxvii.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God of all power, to whom entirely belongeth whatever is best: implant in our hearts the love of Thy name, and grant us an increase of religion that Thou mayest improve in us what is good, and preserve what Thou thus improvest by the practice of piety. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Rom.* vi. 3—11.) BRETHREN: All we who are baptized in Christ Jesus, are baptized in his death. For we are buried together with him by baptism unto death: that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father so we also may walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, whe shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, and that we may serve sin no longer. For he that is dead, is justified from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall live also together with Christ. Knowing that Christ, rising again from the dead, dieth now no more, death shall no more have dominion over him. For in that he died to sin, he died once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. So do you also reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

EXPLANATION. The apostle here teaches, that by baptism we are planted in Christ, are made members of His body, and must therefore die to sin; as Christ by His death died to physical life, but has risen again, so must we bury sin, by constant renewal of baptismal vows, and by self-mortification, and rise to a Christian life. As members of Christ's body we should in a spiritual manner imitate Him. As He permitted His body to be nailed to the cross and atoned for our sins, so should we crucify our sins, that is, our body's concupiscence by mortification, put it to death and bury it, and as He after His resurrection lives always for God, lives a divine life for the honor of God, so we, risen from the death of sin, should lead a pious life for God, as commanded by Christ, and by His grace return no more to the old sins.

ASPIRATION. I trust, O Lord Jesus, that by the merits of Thy passion I have risen from the death of sin, and now grant me Thy grace, that as Thou dost die no more, but livest for God, so my soul may die no more by sin, but live for God, according to Thy law.

GOSPEL. (*Mark.* viii. 1—9.) At that time: When there was a great multitude with Jesus, and had nothing to eat: calling his disciples together, he saith to them: I have compassion on the multitude; for behold, they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat: and if I send them away fasting to their own home, they will faint in the way: for some of them came afar off. And his disciples answered him: From whence can ony one fill them here with bread in the wilderness? And he asked them: How many loaves have ye? Who said: Seven. And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and taking the seven loaves,

giving thanks he broke, and gave to his disciples for to set before them, and they set them before the people. And they had a few little fishes; and he blessed them, and commanded them to be set before them. And they did eat and were filled, and they took up that which was left of the fragments, seven baskets. And they that had eaten, were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

Why does Christ say: I have compassion on the multitude?

Partly because of His mercy and goodness to man, and partly to prove that which He taught on another occasion (*Matt.* vi. 33.), that to those who seek first the kingdom of heaven and justice, all other things will be added, even though they do not ask for it; for no one of the multitude asked Christ for food, and yet He provided for all.

REMARK. The instruction after the gospel for the fourth Sunday in Lent, where a similar miracle is mentioned, may be read to-day.

INSTRUCTION ON BLESSINGS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

And He blessed them. (*Mark.* viii. 7.)

When, seduced by Satan, the first man violated the holy command of God, and brought upon himself by his sin the curse of God, the earth, his habitation, was cursed with him (*Gen.* iii. 17.), and he and all things came into the power of Satan, whom Christ therefore calls the prince of this world. Before sin man was made by God master of all created things; man was subject to God, and all created things subject to man. But when man failed in obedience to God and sinned, all created things revolted against man; the animals fled from him, the fields yielded him only thorns and thistles, the herbs became poisonous to him, or refused him their former wholesome power. Through sin came immense ruin to all men and to the whole earth, the devil drew both into his sphere and made them his servants, and this evil spirit now made use of created things to divert man altogether from God and to cause his eternal ruin. But God decreed, that man and earth should not remain in this condition. Christ, the Son of God, came upon earth, redeemed it from the bonds of Satan, and gave all men the power to become once more God's children. The devil was conquered by the cross, conquered, but not slain, man and the earth were indeed taken from his dominion, but not from his influence; for he even now as the apostle writes (*Eph.* vi. 12.) dominates in the air, even yet goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (i. *Peter* v. 8.);

and as he used the forbidden fruit in paradise to seduce man, he now uses the created things of the earth, in order to tempt man, and make him again by sin his servant. Man and all creation had still to be drawn from this pernicious influence, to be liberated from the bondage of corruption and be brought to the freedom of the children of God. (*Rom.* viii. 19.) This is done in the Church, to which Christ entrusted the power of binding and loosing, and gave the work of sanctifying in the Holy Ghost, by means of blessing and consecration. By virtue of the merits of Christ, and with the assistance of the Holy Ghost, the Church, or the priest in her name, therefore blesses and consecrates persons as well as created things which they are to use, or which she is to apply to the service of God. The Church follows in this the example of Christ and the apostles. Jesus embraced children and laid His hands upon them, blessing them (*Mark.* x. 16.); He blessed bread and fishes, the food of thousands; blessed bread and wine at the last supper (*Matt.* xxvi. 26.); was recognized by the disciples in the blessing of bread (*Luke* xxiv. 30.); blessing the disciples He ascended into heaven (*Luke* li.); by His command the apostles wished peace to every house in which they stepped (*Matt.* x. 12, 13.); and St. Paul expressly says, that every living thing is sanctified by prayer and the word of God. (i. *Tim.* iv. 5.) The blessing by the Church is prefigured in the Old Law. God commanded the priests to sanctify and to consecrate whatever was to belong to His service (*Levit.* viii.), and the Old Law is full of holy blessings and consecrations, which had to be used by the priests (*Exod.* xxix. 36.; xxx. 25.; xl. 9.); and if persons and things used for it, were to be blessed for God's service, how much the more so in the New Law which in place of the type contains the reality and truth! The testimony of Scripture is confirmed by all the holy fathers, and by the constant practice of the Church, which has received from her Head, Christ, the power to bless and to consecrate.

The blessing or benediction of the Church is nothing more than a prayer of intercession, which the priest makes in the name of the Church, that for the sake of Christ (therefore the sign of the cross) and the prayers of the saints, God may give His blessings to a person or thing, and sanctify it. Through consecration in which, besides prayer and the sign of cross, anointing with holy oil is often used, the things required for Church service are placed by themselves and sanctified. Thus people, fruits, bread, wine, houses, ships and fields, are blessed; Churches, altars, bells, &c., are consecrated.

What power have these blessings?

Here a distinction must be made between the blessing of persons and of things. The chief effects of the blessing of persons are: Preservation or liberation from the influence of Satan; preservation of the soul from his temptations and evil suggestions;

preservation of the body and of the property from his pernicious malice; forgiveness of venial sins, and strength to suppress concupiscence; curing of sickness and physical evils, whether natural or supernatural; a blessing upon the person and his surroundings; the imparting of the grace of conversion; the advantage of the prayer of the Church and further grace for the remission of temporal and eternal punishment.—The blessing of things effects: that they are withdrawn from the devil's influence, so that he can no longer use them as a means of bringing us into sin; that God's blessing is thus given us for the welfare of our body and soul; and that they serve us as a protection against the evil spirit and as a means for our salvation.

Whence do the blessings derive their force?

From the merits of Christ who by His death on the cross vanquished Satan, and through whom and in whose name the Church asks God that He may through these merits, and on account of the intercession of the saints, bless a person or thing, and make the use of the things blessed profitable to us in regard to both body and soul. Whether or not the effects of these blessings show themselves in the person who receives the blessing or makes use of the object blessed, depends partly on his faith and moral condition, partly also on the usefulness or profit of the blessing to him. We should not, then, place obstacles in its way by distrust of God and the prayers of the Church, or by a sinful life, and we should be always convinced, that these benedictions will serve for our benefit if according to God's will they are useful and we use them as the Church intends, as a means of overcoming the evil without and within us, to sanctify ourselves and to honor God.

Why are salt and water blessed?

This is plainly shown in the prayer the priest says in blessing them; for he asks, in the name of the Church, that God will pour the virtue of His blessing over the water, that it may conquer devils, prevent sickness, and that all, in houses or in other places, which is sprinkled with it, may be preserved from all impurities, and from every injury, and that He will bless the salt, so that it may be salutary for the body and soul of all who use it.

Why are the people sprinkled with holy water on Sundays?

To remind us, that we should come to the Church service with the innocence of baptism, or that if this has been stained by sin, we should wash it clear with tears of sorrow and repentance; to remind us also, that Jesus by His sacred blood has redeemed and purified us from sin; to admonish us to be most grateful for this incomprehensible act of mercy, and to be beseech our Saviour to purify us more and more, as expressed by the fiftieth psalm: Asperges me hyssopo, &c. "Sprinkle me with hyssop,

and I shall be cleansed," which the priest says. The triple sprinkling of the altar means, that we should assist purely and worthily at the sacred mysteries which are celebrated on the altar, and that all power of cleansing from sin proceeds from Christ whom the altar represents. Finally, the people are sprinkled, with the desire that the temptations of the evil one may depart from all, enabling them to attend with greater fervor and with more recollection to the holy service.

What else is to be remembered concerning the use of blessed things?

That they are to be used with faithful confidence for the purpose for which the Church blessed them, and are to be treated with great reverence, because they are blessed by the Church in the name of Jesus, a custom almost as old as Christianity itself. The Christian must not believe, that blessed things which he possesses, carries, or uses, will make him holy, for he should always remember that things blessed are only a means of sanctification, and are only effectual when the faithful have the earnest will to die rather than sin, to fight with all fervor against the enemies of their salvation, to follow Christ, and be thereby received into the freedom of the children of God and into heaven.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

T the Introit the Church invites us in the following words to give praise to God: Clap your hands all ye Gentiles: Shout unto God with the voice of joy. For the Lord is most high, he is terrible: he is a great King over all the earth. (*Ps.* xlvi.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, whose providence is never deceived in what it appointeth: we humbly beseech Thee to remove whatever may be prejudicial to us: and grant us whatever may be to the advantage of our souls. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Rom.* vi. 19—23.) Brethren: I speak a human thing, because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as you have yielded your members to serve uncleanness and iniquity unto iniquity, so now yield your members to serve justice, unto sanctification. For when you were the servants of sin, you were free from justice. What fruit therefore had you then in

those things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of them is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end life everlasting. For the wages of sin is death. But the grace of God, life everlasting in Christ Jesus our Lord.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul here means to tell the Romans who had been converted to Christianity, but were still sensual and weak in the right, that they ought to be much more zealous in serving God and mastering their passions. Since they were still weak, he demands of them that they should at least strive now as hard to save their souls as they once did to destroy them. This certainly is but right, for many a man, if he would do as much for heaven, as he does for sin and hell, would become just and holy. But to know how wholesome it is to consecrate their members to justice and sanctity, he wishes them to consider what advantage they derived from sin. By sin is gained nothing but shame, confusion, sorrow, and death, but by a pious life God's grace and eternal life.—Often consider this, my Christian, and do not defile yourself with sins, which profit nothing, but bring shame, grief, and the retributive wrath of God.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* vii. 15—21.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: Beware of false prophets, who come to you in the clothing of sheep, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. By their fruits you shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and the evil tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can an evil tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down, and shall be cast unto the fire. Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them. Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doth the will of my Father who is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Who are the false prophets?

Those seducers who by an appearance of virtue and honesty lure innocent simple souls in numerous ways from the right path, and lead them to vice and shame; who by sweet words, such as: "God is full of love, and will not be so severe on sin, He does not require so very much of us, He knows we are weak, and if a

person sins, he can be converted," seek to steal away the fear of God, delicacy, and modesty from harmless souls, and then ruin them. Guard against such hypocrites, for they have the poison of vipers on their tongues. By the false prophets are also meant the false teachers and propagators of error who by superficial words degrade the true faith, who speak always of love and liberty, and who under the pretence of making people free and happy, bring many a soul to doubt and error, depriving them of true faith and peace of heart. Lend no them ear to, do not read their books and writings, but carry them to your pastor, and try to induce others to do the same.

How can we know the false prophets?

We may know the deceivers by their works, for evil, corrupted men can produce only bad fruit. If we look into their life and

inquire about it, we shall find, that at heart they are immoral hypocrites who observe external propriety only that they may the more easily spread their poison. The false teachers and messengers of error may be known partly from their lives, but especially by their intentions, which are to subvert all divine order, and to put the unrestrained lust of the flesh and tyranny in its place.

Who else are understood by the false prophets?

Those who under pretence of making men happy and rich, induce the credulous to make use of superstition, of wicked arts, deceit, and injustice; and especially those who under the deceiving appearance of liberty and equality, independence, and public good, incite them to things which lead to open or secret revolt against civil and ecclesiastical authority.

Be not deceived by these so called public benefactors, who look always to their own advantage, but do you trust in God, support yourself honestly, live like a Christian, and you will find true liberty and happiness here and there.

Why does Christ say: Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down and shall be cast into the fire?

He shows by this, that to have done nothing good, is enough for damnation; and He adds, therefore, Not every one that saith: Lord, Lord (who outwardly professes himself my servant, but is not really such), shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who, by the fulfilment of the duties of his state of life and by the practice of good works, does the will of my Father, merits heaven. Strive then, my Christian, to fulfil God's will in all things, and to perform your daily duties with a good intention, and you will certainly obtain the kingdom of heaven.

INSTRUCTION ON GOOD WORKS.

What is a good work?

A good work is anything which according to God's will is in itself good, and is performed with the proper intention, in a state of grace, and for love of God.

What are the principal good works?

Prayer, fasting, and almsdeeds. These are especially inculcated in holy Scripture. (*Tob.* xiii. 8.) By prayer is here understood all religious services, by fasting all mortification of body and soul, by almsdeeds all works of charity.

How many kinds of charitable works are there?

Two kinds, the corporal and spiritual.

What are the spiritual works of mercy?

Those that are performed for the good of the soul, as: to punish sinners, to teach the ignorant, to advise the doubtful, to console the afflicted, to patiently suffer injustice, to willingly forgive those who have injured us, to pray for the living and the dead.

What are the corporal works?

Those which are performed for the good of the body, as: to feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to clothe the naked, to harbor strangers, to liberate captives, to visit the sick, and to bury the dead.

Can we be saved without good works?

No, for Christ expressly says: Every tree that bringeth forth not good fruit, shall be cut down and shall be cast into the fire. And the servant in the gospel who did not even waste the talent received, but only hid it in the ground, was cast, for that alone, into outer darkness. Therefore those are very wrong who hope to go to heaven simply, because they do nothing bad. This error St. Chrysostom meets plainly, when he says: "If you had a servant who was, it is true, no robber, no glutton or drunkard, but who sat at home idle, neglecting every thing for which you had employed him, would you not pay him with the whip and send him off? Is it not bad enough not to do that which duty demands?" A Christian is bad enough who though he does no wrong, does no good, and he loses the reward; for heaven is the reward of work performed, and if no work has been done, no reward is to be expected.

SUPPLICATION. Guard me from false prophets, O Lord, and from heretics, and seducers, and grant me the grace, that according to St. Paul's instructions I may become fruitful in all good works. Inflame my heart, that I may adorn my faith with them, thus do the will of the Heavenly Father, and render myself worthy of heaven.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

He Introit of Mass reads: We have received thy mercy, O God, in the midst of thy temple: According to thy name, so also is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of justice. Great is the Lord, and exceedingly to be praised; in the city of

our God, on his holy mountain. (*Ps.* xlvii.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, the spirit of thinking and doing what is right, that we, who cannot even subsist without Thee, may live according to Thee. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Rom.* viii. 12—17.) BRETHREN: We are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you shall die: but if by the spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live. For whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For you have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear: but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry: Abba (Father). For the Spirit himself giveth testimony to our spirit, that we are the sons of God. And if sons, heirs also: heirs indeed of God, and joint—heirs with Christ.

Who live according to the flesh?

Those who follow the evil pleasures and desires of corrupted nature, and do the works of the flesh: impurity, lewdness, gluttony, &c. Such men are not directed by the Spirit of God, who dwells not in the sensual man (*Gen.* vi. 3.); they are no children of God, will be no heirs of God, and will die the eternal death. But he who is directed by the Spirit of God, and with Him and through Him crucifies his flesh and its concupiscence, is inspired by the Holy Ghost, who then dwells in him, with filial confidence in God, by which he cries: Abba (Father). By this confidence he is assured that he is a child of God, and also an heir of heaven and coheir with Christ. Prove yourself well, my Christian, that you may know whether also you live according to the flesh, and strive to mortify the carnal, sensual desires by prayer and fasting, that you may by such means become a child of God and heir of heaven.

ASPIRATION. Strengthen me, O Lord, that I may not live according to the desires of the flesh, but resist them firmly by the power of Thy Spirit, and that I may not die the eternal death.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xvi. 1—9.) AT THAT TIME: Jesus spoke to his disciples this parable: There was a certain rich man who had a steward: and the same was accused unto him, that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said to him: How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship: for now thou canst be steward no longer. And

the steward said within himself: What shall I do, because my lord taketh away from me the stewardship? To dig I am not able; to beg I am ashamed. I know what I will do, that when I shall be removed from the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. Therefore calling together every one of his lord's debtors he said to the first: How much dost thou owe my lord? But he said: A hundred barrels of oil. And he said to him: Take thy bill and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then he said to another: And how much dost thou owe? Who said: A hundred quarters of wheat. He said to him: Take thy bill, and write eighty. And the lord com-

mended the unjust steward, for as much as he had done wisely: for the children of this world are wiser in their generation, than the children of light. And I say to you: Make unto you friends of the mammon of iniquity, that when you shall fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings.

Who are represented by the rich man and his steward?

The rich man represents God, the steward, man. To man God has confided the various goods of body and soul, of nature and grace: the five senses, health, strength of body, beauty, skill, power over others, memory, intellect, free will, faith, intelligence, aspiration, time and opportunity for good, temporal riches, and other gifts. These various goods of body and soul, God gives us not as our own, but as things to be used for His honor and the salvation of man. He will therefore demand the strictest account of us if we use them for sin, luxury, seduction, or oppression of others.

What was Christ's view in relating this parable?

To urge us to works of charity, especially to the actual support of the poor, by giving alms.

What friends do we make by almsgiving?

According to St. Ambrose they are, besides the poor, the saints and angels, even Christ Himself; for that which we give to the poor, we give to Christ. (*Matt.* xxxv.) And: He that hath mercy on the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and he will repay him. (*Prov.* xix. 17.) "The hands of the poor," says Peter Chrysologus, "are the hands of Christ." By the hands of the poor we send our riches to heaven, where we will find them after death; for the prayers of the poor like the prayers of the saints, whom we thus make our friends, will decide God to give us the grace to die happily.

Why did his lord commend the steward?

Because of his prudence and foresight, but not for his injustice; for he adds: The children of this world are wiser than the children of light; that is, the earthly minded know better how to manage, and they take more trouble to obtain earthly goods, pleasures, and enjoyments, than do the children of light, the pious, to please God by good works, and to lay up treasures in heaven.

Why is wealth called unjust?

Because riches are often obtained and retained by injustice, often lead man to injustice, and because they are often squandered or unjustly used.

SUPPLICATION. Grant me the grace, O my just God and Judge, that I may so use on this earth the goods con-

fided to me by Thee, that I may make friends, who at my death will receive me into eternal joys.

MORAL LESSONS CONCERNING DETRACTION.

And he was accused. (*Luke* xvi. 1.)

THE steward in the gospel was assuredly justly accused on account of his unjust stewardship; but how many there are who lose their good name and honor by false accusations, and are given a bad name by malicious talk! Alas, what great wrongs do detracting tongues cause in this world! How mean a vice is detraction, how seldom is attention paid to its evil, how rarely is the injury repaired!

When is our neighbor's name slandered?

When a vice which our neighbor has not is affixed to his name; when a secret vice or undiscovered crime of our neighbor, is made known with the intention of hurting him, or when our duty does not require us to mention it; when we attribute an evil intention to him or entirely misconstrue his feeling or actions; when his good qualities or commendable actions are denied or lessened, or his merits underrated; when in cases where it is obligatory to speak in his praise, silence is kept, or the praise is only coldly given; when we lend a willing ear to detractions, and no effort is made to stop them, although it could and should be done; or lastly, when joy is felt in the detraction.

Is detraction a great sin?

Yes, for it is directly opposed to the love of our neighbor, therefore to the love of God and hence it is, as St. Ambrose says, hateful to God and man. By it we rob our neighbor of a wealth greater even than riches (*Prov.* xxii. 1.), and often he is plunged by it into want and misery, even into the greatest vices; St. Ambrose says: "Let us fly from the vice of detraction, for it is altogether a satanic abyss, full of deceit." Finally, detraction is a great sin, because the injury done by it, is very great and irreparable; for as feathers which are shaken out of a bag, and fly far and wide, cannot be collected together again, so words of detraction can seldom be called back and rendered harmless.

What should we do when we have committed this sin?

We should as soon as possible recall the detraction and repair the injury done to our neighbor in regard to his name or temporal goods; we should despise this sin, regret it, and be cleansed from it by penance, and as it is difficult to make reparation for detraction, we should daily pray for him whom we have hurt, and in future guard against committing such a great sin.

Are we not allowed ever to reveal the wrongs of our neighbor?

If it is done only for the entertainment of idle people, or for the sake of news, and to satisfy the curiosity of others, it is never allowed, and always a sin. But it is entirely different when after having reproached or advised our neighbor fraternally between him and ourself, but have not obtained our end, we then tell his wrongs, and sins to parents or superiors for the sake of punishment and reformation; this is not only no sin, but rather a good work and a duty, against which those offend who are silent about the sins of their neighbor, when by speaking they could prevent the sin and save him much trouble.

Is it a sin to willingly listen to detractors?

Yes, for we thus give the detractors occasion and encouragement to go on. Therefore St. Bernard says: "Whether detraction is a greater sin than listening to the stealer of a good name, I will not decide. The devil sits on the tongue of the detractor as he does on the ear of the listener." In such cases we must strive to interrupt, to prevent the detracting words, or else to go away; or if we can do none of these, we must show by our sad face our displeasure, for the Holy Ghost says: The Northwind driveth away rain as doth a sad countenance a backbiting tongue. (*Prov.* xxv. 23.) The same thing is to be observed in regard to improper language.

What varieties of detraction are there?

There is a special, hateful kind of detraction which by witty and sneering words degrades and ridicules others. But still worse is that which carries real or false faults and mistakes of others from one place to another, thus exciting those who are on good terms with each other to hard feeling, or making those who are living in enmity more opposed to each other, by repeating to each the other's remarks. The whisperer and the double tongued, says the Holy Ghost, is accursed, for he hath troubled many that were at peace.

What should keep us from detraction?

The thought of the greatness of this sin; of the difficulty, even impossibility of repairing the injury caused; of the punishment it incurs, for St. Paul expressly says: Calumniators shall not possess the kingdom of God (i. *Cor.* vi. 10.), and Solomon writes: Suddenly shall rise the destruction of the detractors. (*Prov.* xxiv. 22.)

SUPPLICATION. Guard me, O most tender Jesus, that blinded neither by hatred nor envy, I may not rob my neighbor, by backbiting, of his good name, or make myself guilty of such a grievous sin.

CONSOLATION FOR THOSE WHO HAVE SUFFERED FROM DETRACTION.

IF your good name has been taken away by evil tongues, you may be consoled by knowing that God permits it to humble you, to exercise you in patience and free you from pride and vain self-complacency. Turn your eyes to the saints of the Old and the New Law, to the chaste Joseph, who lies in prison on a false charge of adultery (*Gen.* xxxix.), to the meek David publicly accused by Semei as a blood-thirsty man (ii. *Kings* xvi.), to the chaste Susanna, who is also accused of adultery, tried, and condemned to death (*Dan.* xiii.); above all look upon the Saint of Saints, upon Jesus, who is called a drunkard, accused and condemned as a blasphemer, a friend of the devil, an inciter of sedition among the people, and who like the greatest criminal is nailed to the cross between two thieves. Remember besides that it does you no injury in the sight of God, if all possible evil is said of you, and that He, at all times, cares for those who trust themselves to Him; for he who touches the honor of those who fear God, touches, as it were, the pupil of His eye (*Zach.* ii. 8.), which He will not allow to pass unpunished.

PRAYER. O most innocent Jesus, who wert thus calumniated, I submit myself wholly to Thy divine will, and am ready like Thee, to bear all slanders and detractions, as with perfect confidence I yield to Thy care my good name, convinced that Thou at Thy pleasure wilt defend and protect it, and save me from the hands of my enemies.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

IMplore God for help and assistance against all temptations from visible and invisible enemies, and say with the priest at the Introit: Behold, God is my helper, and the Lord is the support of my soul: turn out the evils upon my enemies, and cut them off in thy truth, O Lord, my protector. (*Ps.* liii.) Save me, O God, by thy name: and deliver me in thy strength. Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. May the ears of Thy mercy, O Lord, be open to the prayers of Thy suppliants: and, that

they may succeed in their desires, make them ask those things that are agreeable to Thee. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (i. *Cor.* x. 6—13.) Brethren: Let us not covet evil things, as they also coveted. Neither become ye idolaters, as some of them: as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed fornication, and there fell in one day three-and-twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ: as some of them tempted, and perished by the serpents. Neither do you murmur: as some of them murmured, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now all these things happened to them in figure: and they are written for our correction, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh himself to stand, take heed lest he fall. Let no temptation take hold on you but such as is human. And God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able: but will make also with temptation issue, that you may be able to bear it.

Can we sin by thought and desire?

Yes, if we desire wrong and forbidden things, or voluntarily think of them with pleasure, even though the deed is not done; for God prohibits not only evil deeds, but evil thoughts and desires, as for the neighbor's wife or goods. (*Exod.* xx. 17.) Christ says (*Matt.* v. 28.), that he who looks upon a woman with evil desire, has already committed adultery. But evil, wicked thoughts, and imaginings are sinful only when a person, knowing that they are bad, consents and persists in them; but if he fights against them with disgust for them, He will even deserve reward. For this reason God sometimes permits even the just to be tempted by them.

What is meant by tempting God?

Demanding presumptuously a mark or sign of divine omnipotence, goodness, or justice. This sin is committed when without cause we desire, that articles of faith should be demonstrated and confirmed by a new miracle; when we throw ourselves needlessly into danger of death, or danger for the soul, hoping God will save us; when in dangerous illness the ordinary remedies are rejected, and all trusted to God.

Is it a great sin to murmur against God?

That it is such, may be learned from the punishment which God inflicted on the murmuring Israelites; for besides Kore, Dathan, and Abiron whom the earth devoured, many thousands of them

were consumed by fire; and yet these had not murmured against God directly, but only against Moses and Aaron whom God had placed over them as their leaders. From this it is seen, that God looks upon murmuring against spiritual and civil authority, instituted by Him, as murmuring against Himself. Hence Moses said to the Israelites: Your murmuring is not against me, but against the Lord. (*Exod.* xvi. 8.)

ASPIRATION. Purify my heart, I beseech Thee, O Lord, from all evil thoughts and desires. Let it never enter my mind to tempt Thee, or to be dissatisfied with Thy fatherly dispensations. Permit me to be tempted not beyond my strength, but grant me so much fortitude, that I may overcome all temptations, and even derive benefit from them for my soul's salvation.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xix. 41—47.) At that time: When he drew near Jerusalem, seeing the city, he wept over it, saying: If thou also hadst known, and that in this thy day, the things that are to thy peace: but now they are hidden from thy eyes. For the days shall come upon thee: and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and straiten thee on every side, and beat thee flat to the ground, and thy children who are in thee: and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone: because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation. And entering into the temple, he began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought. Saying to them: It is written: "My house is the house of prayer: but you have made it a den of thieves." And he was teaching daily in the temple.

Why did our Saviour weep over the city of Jerusalem?

He wept for the ingratitude, the blindness, and obduracy of its inhabitants, who would not receive Him as their Redeemer. He was saddened by the ruin which was to come upon them, and by the thought that all His works and sufferings would be lost for them.

What was the time of visitation?

It was the time when God sent them one prophet after another, who urged them to penance, and whom they persecuted, stoned, and killed. (*Matt.* xxiii. 34.) Especially it was the time of Christ's ministry, when He so often announced His salutary doctrine in the temple of Jerusalem, confirmed it by miracles, proving Himself to be the Messiah, the Saviour of the world, but was despised and rejected by this hardened and impenitent city.

Who are prefigured by this hardened and impenitent city?

The hard hearted, unrepentant sinners who will not recognize the time of God's visitation, in which He urges them by the mouths of His preachers, confessors, and superiors, and by inward inspiration to reform their lives and seek the salvation of their soul, but who give no ear to these admonitions, and defer conversion to the end of their lives. Their end will be that of this impious city; then the enemy, that is, the evil spirit, will surround their soul, tempt, terrify, and drag it into the abyss of ruin. Oh, how foolish it is so lightly to fritter away the time of grace, the days of salvation! Oh, how would the damned do penance, could they but return to earth! Oh, how industriously would they use the time to save their soul! Use then, my dear Christian, the time of grace which God designs for you, and which, when it is run out or carelessly thrown away, God will not lengthen for a moment.

Will God conceal from the impious that which serves their salvation?

No; "but while they are running after the pleasures of this life," says St. Gregory, "they see not the misfortunes treading in their footsteps, and as the consideration of the future makes them uncomfortable in the midst of their worldly pleasures, they remove the terrible thought of it from them, and thus run with eyes blindfolded in the midst of their pleasure into eternal flame. Not God, but they themselves hide the knowledge of all that is for their peace, and thus they perish."

ASPIRATION. I beseech Thee, O Lord, who didst weep over the city of Jerusalem, because it knew not the time of its visitation, to enlighten my heart, that I may recognize the time of grace, and make it useful to myself.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CITY AND TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM.

Has our divine Saviour's prophecy concerning the city of Jerusalem been fulfilled?

YEs, and in the most terrible manner. The Jews, oppressed by the Romans, their cruel masters, revolted, killed many of their enemies, and drove them out of Jerusalem. Knowing well that this would not be permitted to pass unavenged, the Jews armed themselves for a desperate resistance. The Emperor Nero sent a powerful army under the command of Vespasian against the city of Jerusalem, which first captured the smaller fortresses of Judea, and then laid siege to the city. The want and misery of the inhabitants had already reached the highest pitch; for within the city, ambitious men had caused conflicts; factions had been formed, daily fighting each other, and reddening the streets with blood, while the angry Romans stormed outside. Then a short time of respite was granted to the unfortunate Jews. The Emperor Nero was murdered at Rome in the year of our Lord 68; his successor Galba soon died, and the soldiers placed their beloved commander Vespasian upon the imperial throne. He, then, left Jerusalem with his army, but in the year 70, sent his son Titus with a new army to Judea, with orders to capture the city at any price, and to punish its inhabitants.

It was the time of Easter, and a multitude of Jews had assembled from all provinces of the land, when Titus appeared with his army before the gates of Jerusalem, and surrounded the city. The supply of food was soon exhausted, famine and pestilence came upon the city and raged terribly. The leader of the furious revolutionists, John of Gischala, had the houses searched, snatched the food from the starving, or forced it from them by terrible tortures. To save themselves from this outrageous tyrant, the Jews took the leader of a band of robbers, named Simon, with his

whole gang into the city. John and Simon with their followers now sought to annihilate each other. John took possession of the temple. Simon besieged him; blood was streaming in the temple and in the streets. Only when the battle din of the Romans was heard from without, did the hostile factions unite, go to meet the enemy, and resist his attack. As the famine increased, many Jews secretly left the city to seek for herbs. But Titus captured them with his cavalry, and crucified those who were armed. Nearly five hundred men, and sometimes more, were every day crucified in sight of the city, so that there could not be found enough crosses and places of execution; but even this terrible sight did not move the Jews to submission. Incited by their leaders to frenzy, they obstinately resisted, and Titus finding it impossible to take the city by storm, concluded to surround the city with walls in order to starve the inhabitants. In three days his soldiers built a wall of about ten miles in circumference, and thus the Saviour's prediction was fulfilled: Thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and straiten thee on every side.

The famine in this unfortunate city now soon reached its most terrific height; the unfortunate inhabitants searched the very gutters for food, and ate the most disgusting things. A woman, ravenous from hunger, strangled her own child, roasted it, and ate half of it; the leaders smelling the horrible meal, tore a way into the house, and by terrible threats compelled the woman to show them what she had eaten; she reached them the remaining part of the roasted child, saying: "Eat it, it is my child; I presume you are not more dainty than a woman, or more tender than a mother." Stricken with terror they rushed from the house. Death now carried away thousands daily, the streets and the houses were full of corpses. From the fourteenth of April when the siege commenced to the first of July, there were counted one hundred and fifty eight thousand dead bodies; six hundred thousand others were thrown over the walls into the trenches to save the city from infection. All who could fly, fled; some reached the camp of the Romans in safety; Titus spared the helpless, but all who fell armed into his hands, were crucified. Flight did no more offer security. The Roman soldiers had learned, that many Jews had swallowed gold pieces to secure them from the avarice of the robbers, and therefore the stomachs of many were cut open. Two thousand such corpses were found on one morning in the camp of the Romans. Titus' attempts to prevent this cruelty, were unavailing. Finally, when misery had reached its height, Titus succeeded in carrying the fort Antonia, and with his army forced a passage as far as the temple which had been held by John of Gischala with his famous band. Desirous of saving the temple, Titus offered the revolutionists free passage from it, but his proposition was rejected, and the most violent contest then raged;

the Romans trying to enter the temple, and being continually repulsed, at last, one of the soldiers seized a firebrand, and lifted up by a comrade, threw it into one of the rooms attached to the temple. The flames in an instant caught the whole of the inner temple, and totally devoured it, so that this prediction of our Lord was also fulfilled. The Romans butchered all the inhabitants whom they met, and Titus having razed the ruins of the temple and city to the ground, ploughed it over, to mark that this city was never to be rebuilt. During the siege one million one hundred thousand Jews lost their life; ninety seven thousand were sold as slaves, and the rest of the people dispersed over the whole earth.

Thus God punished the God murdering, impenitent city and nation, over whose wretchedness the Saviour wept so bitterly, and thus was fulfilled the prediction made by Him long before.

What do we learn from this?

That as this prediction so also all other threats and promises of the Saviour will be fulfilled. The destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem, the dispersion of the Jews, are historical facts which cannot be denied, and testify through all centuries to the truth of our Lord's word: Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away. (*Matt.* xxiv. 35.)

USEFUL LESSONS CONCERNING DEATH-BED REPENTANCE.

Can a sinner depend upon conversion at the end of his life?

BY no means, for this would be to sin against the mercy of God, and the Holy Ghost. "God," says St. Augustine, "generally so punishes such negligent sinners, that in the end they forget themselves, as in health they forgot God." And God Himself says: They have turned their back to me, and not their face: and in the time of their affliction they will say: Arise, and deliver us! Where are the gods whom thou hast made thee? Let them arise and deliver thee in the time of thy affliction. (*Jer.* ii. 27—28.) And although we have a consoling example in the case of the penitent thief, yet this, as St. Augustine says, is only one, that the sinner may not despair; and it is only one, so that the sinner may have no excuse for his temerity in putting off his repentance unto the end.

What may we hope for those who put off their repentance until the end of their life?

We should always hope the best, although, as St. Augustine says, it cannot be asserted with any security, that he who repents at the end, has received forgiveness; and St. Jerome writes: "Scarcely one out of thousands whose life was impious, will truly

repent in death and obtain forgiveness of sin;" and St. Vincent Ferrara says, "the good death of a man who has lived impiously, is a greater miracle than the raising of the dead to life." We need not be surprised at this, for repentance at the end of life is extorted by the fear of death and the coming judgment. "It is not, that he abandons sin," says St. Augustine, "but sin abandons him, and he would not cease to sin, if he ceased not to live." But what can we hope from such a conversion?

When should we repent?

While we are in health, in possession of our senses and strength, for according to the words of St. Augustine, the repentance of the sick is sick, and the repentance of the dying also dying. As experience proves, man in sickness is so tormented and bewildered by the pains of sickness and the fear of death, by remorse of conscience, and the temptations of the devil as well as by the anxiety for those whom he leaves, that he can scarcely collect his thoughts, much less fix them for true repentance. If it comes so hard for many to do penance while they are in health, and have nothing to prevent them from elevating their mind to God, how much more difficult will it be for them, when the head and the whole body are weakened and tortured by the pains of sickness. It has been made known by many persons when convalescent, that they retained not the slightest recollection of anything which occured during their illness, and although they confessed and received the last Sacraments, they did not remember it. If, then, you have committed a grievous sin, do not delay to be reconciled as soon as possible by perfect contrition and a sacramental confession. By no means should you put it off from one day to another, for you thus render your conversion more difficult, so much that without extraordinary grace from God, you cannot repent, which grace God gives not to the presumptuous scoffer.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

T the Introit of the Mass pray with the Church for God's help to guard us against our enemies: When I cried out, the Lord heard my complaint against those that were coming against me: and he that was before all ages, and will be for ever, humbled them: cast thy care on the Lord, and he will feed thee. (*Ps.* liv.) Hear, O God, my prayer, and despise not my petition: look down upon me, and hear me. Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who chiefly manifestest Thy Almighty power in pardoning and shewing mercy, increase Thy goodness towards us: that having recourse to Thy promises, we may be partakers of Thy heavenly blessing. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (i. *Cor.* xii. 2—11.) BRETHREN: You know that, when you were heathens, you went to dumb idols, according as you were led. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man, speaking by the spirit of God, saith anathema to Jesus. And no man can say the Lord Jesus, but by the Holy Ghost. Now there are diversities of graces, but the same spirit. And there are diversities of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but the same God who worketh all in all. And the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man unto profit. To one indeed, by the Spirit, is given the word of wisdom: and to another, the word of knowledge, according to the same spirit: to another, faith in the same spirit: to another, the grace of healing in one spirit: to another, the working of miracles: to another, prophecy: to another, the discerning of spirits: to another, divers kinds of tongues: to another, interpretation of speeches. But in all these things one and the same spirit worketh, dividing to every one according as he will.

EXPLANATION. The apostle here reminds the Corinthians converted from heathenism of the great grace they received from God in their conversion, and urges them to be grateful for it; for while heathens they cursed Jesus, but being now brought to the knowledge of the Spirit of God, they possess Christ as their Lord and Redeemer, who can be known and professed only by the enlightment of the Holy Ghost. This, as all other graces which they have received from God, is a free gift of the Holy Ghost who gives to whomsoever He pleases and who alone produces all the effect of them. These graces, the word of wisdom to impart to others and to instruct in the mysteries of the Christian religion, the gift of healing sickness, the gift of miracles and of prophecy, the gift of discerning spirits, to know if one is governed by the Spirit of God, or of the world, Satan and the flesh, the gift of tongues and others, the Holy Ghost gave, in the early times of Christianity to the faithful, especially to the pastors of the Church, for the propagation of the gospel; but these became rarer the more the faith spread and grew firmer; whereas the gifts which sanctify man, will always remain in the Church of God.

[See Instruction on the gifts of the Holy Ghost, Pentecost.]

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xviii. 9—14.) At that time: Jesus spake this parable to some who trusted in themselves as just, and despised others. Two men went up into the temple to pray: the one was a Pharisee, and the other a Publican. The Pharisee standing, prayed thus with himself: O God, I give thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, as also is this publican. I fast twice in the week: I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican standing afar off would not so much as lift up his eyes towards heaven: but struck his breast, saying: O God, be merciful to me a sinner. I say to you, this man went down to

his house justified rather than the other, because every one that exalteth himself, shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted.

Why did Christ make use of this parable of the Pharisee and the Publican?

To teach us never to proudly condemn or despise a man, even when he seems wrong, and to enable us to understand how easily we may be mistaken like the Pharisee who despised the Publican, whom he considered a great sinner, while, in reality, the man was justified before God on account of his repentant spirit.

What should we do before entering a Church?

We should reflect, that we are going into the house of God, to speak to Him, and should therefore think well, what we are about to say to Him, and what we wish to ask of Him. That we may make ourselves less unworthy to be heard, we should humble ourselves as did Abraham (*Gen.* xviii. 27.), remembering that we are dust and ashes, and on account of our sins unworthy to appear before the eyes of God, much less to address Him, for God listens to the prayers of the humble only (*Ps.* ci. 18.), gives them His grace, and resists the proud. (*James* iv. 6.)

Was the Pharisee's prayer acceptable to God?

No, for it was no prayer, but boasting and ostentation; while he praised himself, enumerated his apparent good works, he attributed them all to himself, taking away all the honor from God, hiding his pride under the gloss of sanctity, despising others, judging them rashly, regarding them as extortioners, unjust, adulterers, and thus he sinned, instead of meriting the grace of God.

Was the Publican's prayer acceptable to God?

Yes, for though short, it was humble and contrite. He did not stand in the front of the temple, but at a distance, as if to acknowledge himself unworthy of the presence of God and communion with men. He stood with down cast eyes, thus showing that he considered himself because of his sins unworthy to look towards heaven, teaching us to regard ourselves, on account of our sins, unworthy to appear in the presence of God. He confessed himself a sinner, and struck his breast to punish, as St. Augustine says, the sins which he had committed in his heart. This is why also we during Mass several times strike our breast, for by this we acknowledge that we are miserable sinners, and that we regret our sins.

CONCERNING PRIDE AND VAIN GLORY.

WE should especially learn from this gospel, that God looks upon the humble, but is far from the proud (*Ps.* cxxxvii. 6.),

and that He resists the proud and exalts the humble. The Pharisee went to the temple entirely wrapt up in himself, fancying himself replete with good works, but returned empty and hated by God; the Publican, on the contrary, appearing before God as a public but penitent sinner, returns justified. Truly an humble sinner is better in the sight of God than a proud just man!

He who glories in his own good works, or performs them to please men and to win their praise, loses their merit in the eyes of the most High, for Christ says: Take heed that you do not your justice before men, that you may be seen by them: otherwise you shall not have a reward from your Father who is in heaven. (*Matt.* vi. 1.)

In order that we may learn to despise vain glory, these teachings should be well borne in mind. We should consider, that it will happen to the seeker after vain glory, as to the man who made many toilsome journeys on land and sea in order to heap up wealth, and had no sooner acquired it than he was shipwrecked and lost all. Thus the ambitious man avariciously seeking glory and honor, will find, when dying that the merit which he might have had for his good works, is now lost to him, because he did not labor for the honor of God. To prevent such an evil, strive at the commencement of every good work which you undertake to turn your heart by a good intention to God.

But that you may plainly recognize the vice of pride, which generally keeps itself concealed, and that you may avoid it, know that pride is an inordinate love of ostentation, and an immoderate desire to surpass others in honor and praise. The proud man goes beyond himself, so to speak, makes himself out far more than he really is, and, like the Pharisee, despises others; the humble man, on the contrary, has a low estimate of himself, looks upon himself as nothing and, like the Publican, despises no one but himself, and thus is pleasing in the sight of God.

ASPIRATION. O God, who dost regard the prayers of the humble, but dost despise and throw away the proud, I earnestly beseech Thee to give me an humble heart, that I may imitate the humility of Thy only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and by so doing become less unworthy to be exalted with Him in heaven.

INSTRUCTION ON GRACE.

IN the epistle of this day the Apostle St. Paul speaks of the different gifts of the Holy Ghost which He distributes as He pleases. The e extraordinary graces which the apostle m ntions, are not necessary for salvation. But the Church teaches, that the grace of God, of the Holy Ghost, is necessary for salvation, because without it we could neither properly believe, nor faithfully

keep the commandments of God. For the holy religion of Jesus teaches us, and experience confirms it, that since the fall of our first parents we are weak and miserable, and by ourselves, of our own strength, we cannot know or perform the good necessary for our salvation. We need a higher aid, a higher assistance, and this aid, this assistance is called grace.

What, then, is grace?

Grace is an inward, supernatural gift which God from pure goodness, and in consideration of Christ's merits, grants us to enable us to work out our salvation.

Grace is a gift, that is, a present, a favor, a benefit. It is an inward and supernatural gift; an inward gift, because it is bestowed upon man's soul in distinction from external gifts and benefits of God, as: food, clothes, health, the preaching of God's word; it is a supernatural gift, because by supernatural is meant that which is above nature. In creating our souls God gives us a certain degree of light which enables us to think, reflect, judge, to acquire more or less knowledge: this is called natural light. In the same way He gives our souls the power in some measure to overcome our sensual vicious inclination; this power is called natural power (virtue). To this natural light and power must be added a higher light and a higher power, if man would be sanctified and saved. This higher light and higher power is grace. It is therefore called a supernatural gift, because it surpasses the natural power of man, and produces in his understanding and in his will wholesome effects, which man could not produce without it. For example, divine faith, divine love is a supernatural gift or grace of God, because man of his own power could never receive as certain God's revelations and His incomprehensible mysteries with so great joy and so firm conviction, and could never love God above all things and for His own sake, unless God assisted him by His grace.

God grants us grace also through pure benevolence without our assistance, without our having any right to it; He grants it without cost, and to whom He pleases; but He gives it in consideration of the infinite merits of Christ Jesus, in consideration of Christ's bloody death on the cross, and of the infinite price of the redemption He accomplished on the cross, for us. Finally, grace is a gift of God, by which to work out our salvation, that is, it is only by the grace of God, that we can perform meritorious works to aid us in reaching heaven; without grace it is impossible for us to perform any good action, even to have a good thought by which to gain heaven.

From this it follows, that with the grace of God we can accomplish all things necessary for our salvation, can fulfil all the commandmends of God, but without grace can do nothing meritorious; also that grace is given to all, so that the wicked perish,

not because they could not, but because they would not be good, and that we can resist grace, and therefore by our own fault perish.

How is grace divided?

It is of two kinds, the actual and the sanctifying grace.

The actual grace is God's assistance which we always need to accomplish a good work, to avoid sin which we are in danger of committing, or that grace which urges us on to good, assisting us in accomplishing it; for God it is, says the Apostle Paul (*Phil.* ii. 13.), who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish. If a good work is to be done by us, God must enlighten our mind, that we may properly know the good and distinguish it from evil; He must rouse our will and urge it on to do the known good and to avoid the evil; He must also uphold our will and increase our strength that what we wish to do, we may really accomplish.

This actual grace is, therefore, necessary to the just, that they may always remain in sanctifying grace, and accomplish good works; it is necessary to the sinner, that he may reach the state of sanctifying grace.

What is sanctifying grace?

It is the great benefit which God bestows upon us, when He sanctifies and justifies us; in other words: Sanctifying grace is the love of God, given to us by the Holy Ghost, which love dwells in us and whose temple we become, or it is the advent and residence of God in our hearts, as promised in the words of Jesus: If any one keep my word, I will come to him and abide in him (*John* xiv. 24.); and: If any one love me, my Father will love him, and we will come to him and will make our abode with him. (*John* xiv. 23.)

He who possesses sanctifying grace, possesses the greatest treasure that a man can possess on earth. For what can be more precious than to be beautiful in the sight of God, acceptable to Him, and united with Him! He who possesses this grace, carries within himself the supernatural image of God, he is a child of God, a friend of God, and has a right to the inheritance of heaven.

How is this sanctifying grace lost?

It is lost by every mortal sin, and can only be regained by a complete return to God, by true repentance and amendment. The loss of sanctifying grace, which is given to every one in baptism, is a far greater injury than the loss of all earthly possessions, greater than the loss of honor, greater even than the loss of life. How terrible, then, is mortal sin which deprives us of this treasure!

INSTRUCTION FOR THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

T the Introit pray with the priest for brotherly union and for protection against our enemies from within and without: God in his sanctuary: God, who maketh brethren abide together in concord: he will give might and strength to his people. (*Ps.* lxvii.) Let God arise, and his enemies shall be dispersed; and let those that hate him, flee before his face. Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O Almighty and eternal God, who, in the abundance of Thy goodness, exceedest both the merits and requests of Thy suppliants; pour forth Thy mercy upon us: and both pardon what our consciences dreadeth, and grant such blessings as we dare not presume to ask. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (i. *Cor.* xv. 1—10.) Brethren: I make known unto you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you have received, and wherein you stand, by which also you are saved: if you hold fast after what manner I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all, which I also received: how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures: and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: and that he was seen by Cephas; and after that by the eleven. Then was he seen by more than five hundred brethren at once; of whom many remain until this present, and some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen by James, then by all the apostles: and last of all, he was seen also by me, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace in me hath not been void.

INSTRUCTIONS. I. St. Paul warns the Corinthians against those who denied the resurrection of Christ and of the deceased faithful, and exhorts them to persevere in the faith which they have received, and to live in accordance with it. Learn from this, how we in our days, in which the true faith in Jesus and His

Church is in so many ways attacked, sneered at, and denied, should firmly persevere in the one only saving Catholic faith, which is the same that Paul preached.

II. Paul in this epistle gives to the Corinthians and to us a beautiful example of humility, by calling himself, because of the sins he had committed before his conversion, one born out of due time, the least of the apostles, and not worthy of being called an apostle, although he had labored so much in the service of Christ. He acknowledges also that all that he was, he was by God's grace only. Thus speaks the truly humble man: he sees in himself nothing but weakness, sin, and wrong, and therefore despises himself and desires to be despised by others. All the good which he professes or practises, he ascribes to God. and gives the honor of it to Him. Strive you, too, my Christian, for such humility. You have far more reason to do so than St. Paul had, because of the sins which you have committed since your baptism, and of the graces which you have abused, and the inactive, useless life you have led.

ASPIRATION. Dispel from me, O most loving Saviour, the spirit of pride, and grant me the humility I so need. Let me realize, that of myself I can do nothing, and that all my power to do good, comes from Thee alone, who alone dost cause me to have the will to do the good and to accomplish it.

GOSPEL. (*Mark* vii. 31—37.) At that time: Jesus going out of the coast of Tyre, he came by Sidon to the sea of Galilee through the midst of the coast of Decapolis. And they bring to him one deaf and dumb: and they besought him that he would lay his hand upon him. And taking him from the multitude apart, he put his fingers into his ears, and spitting, he touched his tongue; and looking up to heaven, he groaned and said to him: Ephphata, that is, Be opened. And immediately his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke right. And he charged them that they should tell no man. But the more he charged them so much the more a great deal did they publish it. And so much the more did they wonder saying: He hath done all things well; he hath made both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak.

Whom may we understand by the deaf and dumb man?

Those who desire neither to hear nor to speak of things concerning salvation.

Why did Christ take the deaf and dumb man apart?

To teach us that he who wishes to live piously and be comforted, must avoid the noisy world, and dangerous society, and must love solitude, for there God speaks to the heart. (*Os.* ii. 14.)

Why did Christ forbid them to mention this miracle?

That we might learn to fly from the praise of men always vain and fickle.

What do we learn from those who brought the deaf and dumb man to Jesus, and notwithstanding the prohibition, made known the miracle?

That in want and sickness we should tenderly assist our neighbor, and not neglect to announce and praise the works of God,

for God works His miracles, that His goodness and omnipotence may be known and honored.

SUPPLICATION. O Lord Jesus, who during Thy life on earth didst cure the sick and the infirm, open my ears that they may listen to Thy will, and loosen my tongue that I may honor and announce Thy works. Take away from me, O most bountiful Jesus, the desire for human praise, that I may not be led, in order to obtain it, to reveal my good works, and thus lose my Heavenly Father's reward. (*Matt.* vi. 1.)

CONCERNING CEREMONIES.

What are ceremonies?

CEremonies are certain forms and usages, used in the service of God, for the increase of devotion and for the edification of our fellowmen; they relate to our inward feeling of which they are the external representation.

Why do we make use of ceremonies in our service?

That we may serve God not only inwardly with the soul, but outwardly with the body by external devotion; that we may keep our attention fixed, may increase our devotion, and edify others; that by these external things we may be raised to the contemplation of divine, inward things. (*Trid. Sess.* 22.)

Are ceremonies founded on Scripture?

They are; for besides those which Christ used in this day's gospel in regard to the deaf and dumb man, by putting His finger into his ears, touching his tongue with spittle, and looking up to heaven, in order that He might prefigure what in this deaf and dumb man and in all men should inwardly take place, namely that they should be susceptible to the word of God, to announce His praise, and to expect help from heaven only, He has also made use of different other ceremonies, by blessing bread and fishes (*Matt.* xv. 36.), spreading clay upon the eyes of a blind man (*John* ix. 6.), praying with bended knees (*Luke* xxii. 41.), falling on His face to pray (*Matt.* xxvi. 39.), breathing upon His disciples and thus giving them the Holy Ghost (*John* xx. 22.), also blessing them with outstretched hands when ascending into heaven. (*Luke* xxiv. 50.) Thus in the Old Law, different ceremonies were prescribed for the Jews, of which indeed in the New Law the greater number have been abolished; others, however, have been retained, and new ones added. If, therefore, the enemies of the Church contend, that ceremonies are superfluous, since Christ Himself reproached the Jews for their ceremonial observances, and said: God must be adored in spirit and in truth, we may, without mentioning that Christ Himself made use of certain ceremonies,

answer, that Christ did not find fault with the use of ceremonies, but only with the intention of the Jews. They observed every ceremony most scrupulously, without at the same time entertaining pious emotions in the heart, and whilst they dared not at any price omit even one ceremony, they scrupled not, to oppress and rob their neighbor. Therefore Christ says: God must be adored in spirit and in truth, that is, in the innermost heart, and no tonly in external appearances.—Do not, therefore, let the objections, nor the scoffs and sneers of the enemies of our Church confound you, but seek to know the spirit and meaning of each ceremony, and to impress them on your heart, and then make use of them to inflame your piety, to glorify God, and to edify your neighbor.

INSTRUCTION CONCERNING THE ABUSE OF THE TONGUE.

There is, perhaps, no member in our body more dangerous and more pernicious than the tongue. The tongue, says the Apostle St. James (iii. 5-12.), is, indeed, a little member and boasteth great things, and it is placed among our members, so that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of our nativity, being set on fire by hell. By it we bless God and the Father: and by it we curse men, who are made after the likeness of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. And, indeed, there is scarcely a country, a city, nay, even a house to be found, in which evil tongues do not originate quarrel and strife, discord and enmity, jealousy and slander, seduction and debauchery. A godless tongue reviles God and His saints, corrupts and distorts the word of God, causes heresy and schism, makes one intemperate, unchaste, envious, and malevolent; in a word, the tongue is according to the apostle a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue of the serpent seduced our first parents, and brought misery and death into the world. (*Gen.* iii.) The tongue of Judas betrayed Jesus. (*Matt.* xxvi. 47.) And what so often causes war among princes, revolts among nations, if it is not the tongue of ambitious, restless men, who seek their fortune in war and revolution? How many, in fine, have plunged themselves into the greatest misery by means of their unguarded tongues? How can we secure ourselves against this dangerous domestic enemy? No otherwise, than that we be slow in speaking, according to the advice of St. James (i. 19.), to speak very few words, and those sensible and well considered. In this way we shall not offend by any word, and we shall become perfect men. (*James* iii. 2.) But since this cannot happen without especial grace of God, we must beg God for this grace, according to the advice of St. Augustine, in the following or similar words:

ASPIRATION. O Lord, set a watch before my mouth, and a door round about my lips, that I may not fall and my tongue destroy me. (*Ps.* cxl. 3.)

INSTRUCTION FOR THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

He Introit of the Mass is the prayer of a troubled soul, asking God for help against its enemies: Come to my assistance, O God: O Lord, make haste to help me: let my enemies who seek my soul, be put to shame and confusion. (*Ps.* lxix.) Let them be put to flight and shame, who conceive evil against me. Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O Almighty and merciful God, from whose gift it proceedeth that Thy people worthily serve Thee; grant we beseech thee, that we may run on, without stumbling, to the obtaining the effects of Thy promises. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (ii. *Cor.* iii. 4—9.) Brethren: We have confidence through Christ towards God: not that we are sufficient to think any thing of ourselves as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is from God. Who also hath made us fit ministers of the New Testament, not in the letter but in the spirit. For the letter killeth: but the spirit quickeneth. Now if the ministration of death, engraven with letters upon stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance, which is made void: how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather in glory? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more the ministration of justice aboundeth in glory.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul speaks in the epistle, from which this extract is taken, about the conversion of the Corinthians, which he accomplished not by his own ability, but with the help of God, who made him a minister of the New Testament, a teacher of the true religion of Christ. The new Testament by the grace of the Holy Ghost recalls the sinner from the death of sin, reconciles him to God, and thus enlivens and makes him pleasing to God, whereas the letter of the Old Law, which contains more external

ceremonies and fewer commandments, did not change the man, but rather destroyed him, that is, threatens with death the transgressor of the law, cannot free man from sin, and reconcile him to God, and thus permits him to die the eternal death. The true religion of Christ, which does not consist of the mere letter, but, penetrated by the Holy Ghost, vivifies, justifies, and sanctifies man, he has preached, and now if the office of Moses, who only preached the deathbringing religion of the letter of the Old Testament, was so glorified by God, that his countenance shone, when he returned from Mount Sinai, where God gave him the law, how much more must the office of the minister of the religion of Christ be distinguished with dignity and glory. Learn from this to esteem the office of preaching and to be humble like St. Paul, who trusted not himself but God, gave no honor to himself, but gave all honor to God.—

GOSPEL. (*Luke* x. 23—37.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: Blessed are the eyes that see the things which you see. For I say to you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them. And behold, a certain lawyer stood up, tempting him, and saying: Master, what must I do to possess eternal life? But he said to him: What is written in the law? how readest thou? He answering said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind: and thy neighbour as thyself." And he said to him: Thou hast answered right: this do and thou shalt live. But he willing to justify himself, said to Jesus: and who is my neighbour? And Jesus answering, said: A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, who had stripped him, and having wounded him went away leaving him half dead. And it chanced that a certain priest went down the same way: and seeing him, passed by. In like manner also a Levite, when he was near the place, and saw him, passed by. But a certain Samaritan being on his journey, came near him; and seeing him, was moved with compassion. And going up to him, bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine: and setting him upon his own beast brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two pieces, and gave to the host, and said: Take care of him; and whatsoever thou shalt spend over and above, I at my return will repay thee. Which of these three in thy opinion was neighbour to him that fell among robbers? But he said: He that shewed mercy to him. And Jesus said to him: Go, and do thou in like manner.

Why does Christ pronounce His disciples blessed?

Because they had lived to see His coming, because they saw Him with their eyes, and heard His teachings. Though we have not the happiness to see Jesus and hear Him, nevertheless we are not less blessed than the apostles, since Christ pronounces those blessed, who do not see and yet believe. (*John* xx. 29.)

What, besides faith, is most necessary for salvation?

That we love God and our neighbor, for in these two commandments consists the whole law. (*Matt.* xxii. 40.)

Who is our neighbor? *)

Every man, be he a stranger or a native, poor or rich, of our faith or of another; for the Samaritan did not ask the one who had fallen among robbers: Who and whence are you? but considered him without asking as his neighbor, and showed himself his neighbor by his prompt assistance.

How should we love our neighbor?

As we love ourselves, that is, we should wish him all the good, and in case of necessity also to do it to him, that we wish ourselves, and, on the contrary, not to wish, not to grudge him, nor to do to him anything that we do not wish ourselves. In this way the Samaritan loved his neighbor, and in this he was far superior to the priest and the Levite.

How can we especially practise love for our neighbor?

By the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. *[See Instruction on the seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost.]* To these must be added, that we are rejoiced at the spiritual and corporal graces of our neighbor, which God communicates to him; that we are sorry for his misfortunes, and, according to the example of St. Paul (i. *Cor.* i. 4.), that we have compassion on him; that we bear with the wants and faults of our neighbor, as St. Paul again admonishes us: Bear ye one another's burdens, and so shall you fulfil the law of Christ. (*Gal.* vi. 2.)

Why should we love our neighbor?

We should love him because God commands it; but there are also other reasons which should induce us to do so. For we are not only according to nature brothers and sisters in Adam, but also according to grace in Christ, and we would have to be ashamed before animals, if we would allow ourselves to be surpassed in the love which they bear one to another (*Eccl.* xiii. 19.); all our neighbors are, as we, the image and likeness of God, bought by the blood of Jesus, partakers of it, and being adopted children, called to heaven, as we are; the example of Christ who loved us, when we were yet His enemies (*Rom.* v. 10.), and gave Himself for us unto death, ought to incite us to their love. But can we be His disciples, if we do not follow Him, and if we do not bear the mark of His disciples, the love of our neighbor, in us? (*John* xiii. 35.) Finally, the necessity of the love for our neighbor ought to compel us, as it were, to it; for without it, we cannot

*) A detailed Instruction on the Love of God, may be found on the seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost. Here we only treat of the love of our neighbor.

be saved. He that loveth not, says St. John, abideth in death (i. *John* iii. 14.), and he that loveth not his brother, doth not love God (i. *John* iv. 20.), because he transgresses one of the greatest commandments of God, and does not fulfil the law. (*Rom.* xiii. 10.)

What is necessary to make the love of our neighbor meritorious?

That it tend to God, that is, that we love our neighbor only in and on account of God, because God commands it, and it is pleasing to Him. For to love our neighbor on account of a natural inclination, or selfinterest, or on account of some other still less honorable reason, and to do him good, is only a natural, animal love, in no wise different from the love of the heathen; for the heathen also love and salute those, that love and salute them in turn. (*Matt.* v. 46.)

PETITION. O my God, Father of mercy! give me a loving and compassionate heart, which will continually impel me to do good to my neighbor for Thy sake, to help the needy, to console the afflicted, to advise the erring, to raise up the oppressed, to comfort the poor, so that I may merit the same from Thy mercy.

What is understood from this day's gospel in a higher and more spiritual sense?

According to the interpretation of the fathers, our father Adam and hence the whole human race is to be understood by the one, who has fallen among robbers. The human race, which through the disobedience of Adam fell into the power of Satan and his angels, was robbed by them of original justice and the grace of God, and moreover wounded and weakened by means of evil concupiscence, in all powers of the soul. The priest and the Levite, who are the image of the Old Law, would not and could not avert this misfortune; but Christ, the true Samaritan, our Helper, embraced the interests of the wounded man, in as much as He poured the oil of His grace, and the wine of His blood into the wounds of man's soul, and thus healed him, and in as much as He led him by baptism into the inn of His Church, and there entrusted him to His priests for further care and nursing. Thank Christ, the good Samaritan, for this great love and care for you, and endeavor to make them of use to you by your cooperation.

INSTRUCTION ON THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF EXTREME UNCTION.

He poured oil and wine into his wounds.
(*Luke* x. 34.)

The conduct of the Samaritan with regard to the mortally wounded man, may be viewed as a figure or emblem of the

holy Sacrament of Extreme Unction, in which Christ, the true Samaritan by means of the holy oil and the prayer of the priest, His representative, dispenses His grace to the sick for the welfare of the soul and often of the body, if the infirm place no obstacle in His way.

Is Extreme Unction a Sacrament?

Yes; for by it the grace of God is communicated to the sick person, by means of its external sign, instituted by Christ.

Did Christ really institute this Sacrament?

Yes; for "Christ", says the Roman Catechism (*Pars* 2. *c.* 6. §.8.), "appears to have made an allusion to this anointing, when He sent His disciples, two by two, before His face;" for concerning it, the following is written by the evangelist (*Mark.* vi. 12, 13.): And going forth, they preached that they should do penance: and they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them. We must believe, that this unction was not invented by the apostles, but ordained by the Lord This is confirmed by the Council of Trent, which says (*Sess.* xiv. *c.* 1.): "Extreme Unction was instituted as a true and real Sacrament of the New Testament, indicated by St. Mark, but recommended and promulgated to the faithful by the Apostle St. James, a relative of our Lord, in these words: Is any man sick among you? let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man: and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him. (*James* v. 14, 15.) St. James could not have said this, if he had not known the institution and command of Christ; to it also uninterrupted and apostolic tradition gives testimony.

What is the external sign of this Sacrament?

The anointing with holy oil, which is blessed by the bishop on Holy or Maundy Thursday, and the prayer of the priest.

What graces does this Sacrament produce in the sick man?

The Council of Trent, in accordance with the words of St. James, enumerates the four following, as effects of this Sacrament: 1) the sins which may still remain to be satisfied for, and 2) the remains of sins are taken away; 3) the soul of the sick man is strengthened and alleviated, in as much as confidence in God is produced in the sick man, and he receives strength, the easier to bear the inconveniences and sufferings of sickness as well as to resist the temptations of the devil, who lies in wait for his heel; and 4) sometimes the health of the body is restored, if it is expedient for the soul. (*Sess.* xiv. *c.* 3.)

What intentions must the sick man have, in order to gain these graces?

Since the Sacraments work the more powerfully the better the preparation made by those who receive them, and since by this Sacrament the known sins are not remitted, but only those that we have forgotten, or have not sufficiently known, therefore the sick man should, if it be possible, receive beforehand the holy Sacrament of Penance and the blessed Eucharist, or if this cannot be done, he should excite in himself an act of perfect contrition with a wish to confess if possible. He should, therefore, not put off the reception of this Sacrament to the last moment, when the violence of the sickness has already taken away the use of his reason and senses, but he should, whilst yet enjoying the use of reason, ask for this Sacrament himself, so that he may receive it with devotion and useful result.

Is this Sacrament necessary for salvation?

No; yet we should not neglect in case of sickness to partake of the excellent fruits of this Sacrament by a worthy reception of it, since the Council of Trent teaches: "The despising of so great a Sacrament, cannot be without a great sin and without contumely to the Holy Ghost." (*Sess.* xiv. *c.* 3.)

Can we receive this Sacrament more than once?

Yes, and as often as we are in danger of death by any sickness; but we must bear in mind, that we can be anointed only once in the same sickness, in which we are in danger of death.

Why is this Sacrament called Extreme Unction?

Because among all unctions which our Lord and Saviour ordained in His Church, this one must be dispensed last. But from this it does not follow, as so many sick persons, weak in faith, believe, that every one who receives this Sacrament, must soon die, but it will rather become a means of salvation for their souls, and if it be for their eternal welfare, it will also restore their bodily health.

What does the priest do, when he enters the house of the sick person?

He wishes the house peace and wellbeing, and prays that God may send His angel to protect its inmates, that He may drive away all the snares of the enemy, and console the sick person, strengthen him, and give health back to him.

Why does the priest sprinkle the sick person with holy water?

To remind him, that he should implore of God the forgiveness of his sins, with tears of contrition; in order to dispel the influence of the evil spirit.

Why is the Litany of the Saints recited?

That God may grant, through the intercession of the saints' whatever may contribute to the welfare of the sick man's body and soul.

For what does the priest pray, when he imposes his hands on the head of the sick person?

He begs, that God, through the imposition of hands and by the intercession of all the saints, may take the sick person under His protection, and destroy the power of the devil, who attacks the sick person particularly in the hour of death.

What does the priest say at the anointing with oil?

He begs, that God, through this anointing and through His gracious mercy, may forgive the sick person all the sins, which he has committed with his five senses. At the same time the sick person should, in a spirit of humility and with a repenting and contrite heart, implore of God the forgiveness of all the sins he has committed with his five senses.

Why does the priest show a crucifix to the sick person, bless him with it, and offer it to him to kiss?

To remind him that, like Jesus, he should suffer with patience, and place his whole confidence in His infinite merits, and be willing to suffer and die for love of Him. For this reason the crucifix ought often to be presented to the dying person, that he may kiss it.

What should the sick person do, when the priest has performed all?

He should use all his remaining strength, to thank God sincerely for the benefit he has received, commend himself to the wounds and the blood of Jesus, and meditate with quiet recollection on death and eternity.

How consoling does our holy Catholic Church appear in the continual use of this holy Sacrament! Having, like a tender mother, received man by holy Baptism into her maternal bosom, by holy Confirmation given him the necessary weapons against sin, heresy, and infidelity, by the holy Sacrament of Penance purified him from stains and sins, and raised him up after the fall, and by the blessed Eucharist nourished him with the bread of life, enriched him with virtues, and secured him against falling, she does not desert him even in the last, all important moment of death. In this dangerous hour, when the dying person, deserted by all, even often by his most intimate friends, or looked upon with fear, lies on his bed of pain, when behind him time ceases and before him a certain, still unknown eternity unfolds itself, when Satan brings all his resources into play, in order to ruin his soul, and the thought of the coming judgment makes the heart quake, — in

this terrible hour the faithful mother, the Catholic Church, does not desert him; she sends the priest, her servant, like a consoling angel to his couch, to encourage the sufferer and strengthen the fearful with the word of the Lord, to cleanse the sinner and reconcile him with God by the Sacrament of Penance, to fortify the weak and nourish him with the bread of life, to strengthen the combatant with the holy oil, and providing him thus with all the means of grace which Jesus obtained and gave to His Church, to conduct his soul with prayer before the face of the eternal Judge, there to find grace and mercy for His most holy name's sake.

If now, dear Christian, you consider this, ought you not to feel happy to be a member of this Church, ought you not to thank God continually, and cling with fidelity to a Church, in which it certainly is good to die, if it is not, as in the bosom of irreligion good to live.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

Ray to-day at the Introit of the Mass with the Church against her enemies: Have regard to thy covenant, O Lord, and abandon not the souls of thy poor: arise, O Lord, judge thine own cause, and forget not the cries of those who seek thee. (*Ps.* lxxiii.) Why, O God, hast thou cast us off unto the end: why is thy wrath kindled against the sheep of thy pasture? Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O Almighty and eternal God, grant us an increase of faith, hope, and charity; and, that we may deserve what Thou promisest, make us love what Thou commandest. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Gal.* iii. 16—22.) Brethren: To Abraham were the promises made and to his seed. He saith not, and to his seeds as of many: but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ. Now this I say, that the testament which was confirmed by God, the law which was made after four hundred and thirty years, doth not disannul, or make the promise of no effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise. But God gave it to Abraham by promise. Why then was the law? It was set because of transgressions, until the seed should come, to whom he made the promise, being

ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not of one: but God is one. Was the law then against the promises of God? God forbid. For if there had been a law given which could give life, verily justice should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by the faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul wishes to show and prove in this epistle to the Galatians, who, misled by false doctrines, adhered too much to the Jewish law, that it is insufficient and useless, that they were liberated by Christ from its yoke, and that they will be saved through a lively faith in Christ, enriched by good works. Therefore he says, that the great promises, made by God to Abraham, who is a type of Christ, were directed to Christ, through whom all nations of the earth, who would believe in Him, would be blessed and saved. (*Gen.* xii. 3., *and* xxii. 18.) The law, indeed, does not contend against the promises, since it rather leads to their attainment, yet it must be placed after these promises because of their advantages, nay even cease to exist, because the promises are now fulfilled, because Christ, the promised Messiah, has really appeared and liberated men, who could not be freed from their sins by the Jewish law.

O, let us be grateful for this promise, yet more, however, for the Incarnation of Christ, whereby this promise has been fulfilled.

ASPIRATION. O God, who didst not only promise, but also didst send the Promised One, and with Him hast given us all, grant that we, through a lively faith in Him, may become heirs of heaven.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xvii. 11—19.) At that time: As Jesus was going to Jerusalem, he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain town, there met him ten men that were lepers, who stood afar off; and lifted up their voice, saying: Jesus, master, have mercy on us. Whom when he saw, he said: Go, shew yourselves to the priests. And it came to pass, that as they went, they were made clean. And one of them when he saw that he was made clean, went back, with a loud voice glorifying God. And he fell on his face before his feet, giving thanks: and this was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said: Were not ten made clean, and where are the nine? There is no one found to return and give glory to God, but this stranger. And

he said to him: Arise, go thy way; for thy faith hath made thee whole.

What may be understood by leprosy, in a spiritual sense?

Sin, particularly impurity, by which the soul of man is stained much more than is the body by the most horrid leprosy. In the Jewish law (*Lev.* xiii.) three kinds of leprosy are enumerated, viz: the leprosy of the flesh, of garments, and of houses. Spiritually, the impure are afflicted with the leprosy of the flesh, who very easily infect others by looks, words, gestures, &c., with this kind of leprosy, and are therefore to be most carefully avoided. The leprosy of garments consists in extravagance of dress and scandalous fashions, whereby not only individuals, but also whole communities are brought to poverty, and many lose their

innocence. The leprosy of houses, finally, is to be found in those places, where scandalous servants are retained, where nocturnal gatherings of both sexes are encouraged, where obscenities are indulged in, where unbecoming dances and plays are held, and filthy actions performed; where married people allow themselves liberties in presence of others, and give scandal to their household, where they take their small children and even such that already have the use of reason with themselves to bed, where they permit children of different sexes to sleep together, &c. Such houses are to be avoided, since they are infected with the pestilential leprosy of sin ,and woe to them who voluntarily remain in them.

Why did the lepers remain standing afar off?

Because it was thus commanded in the law of Moses (*Lev.* xiii. 46.), so that no one would be infected by them. From this we learn, that we must carefully avoid scandalous persons and houses; for he who converses with lewd, vain and unchaste persons, will soon become like them. (*Eccl.* xiii. 31.)

Why did Christ send the lepers to the priests?

This He did to show the honor due to the sacerdotal dignity and the law of God: for it was commanded (*Lev.* xiv.), that the lepers should show themselves to the priests, in order to be declared clean or unclean by them; He did it to try the faith, the confidence, and the obedience of these lepers: for Christ did not wish to heal them upon their mere prayer, but their cure was to cost them something, and they were to merit it by their cooperation. Their purification, therefore, was the reward of their obedience and faith. Further Christ sent these lepers to the priests to show in figure, as it were, that he who wishes to be freed from the leprosy of sin, must contritely approach the priest, sincerely confess his sins to him, and be cleansed by him by means of absolution.

Why did Christ ask for the others, that were also made clean?

To show how much ingratitude displeases Him. Although He silently bore all other injuries, inflicted upon Him, yet He could not permit this ingratitude to pass unresented. So great, therefore, is the vice of ingratitude, hateful alike to God and man! "Ingratitude," says St. Bernard, "is an enemy of the soul, which destroys the merits, vitiates virtues, impedes graces: it is a heavy wind, which dries up the fountain of goodness, the dew of mercy, and the stream of the grace of God." "The best means," says St. Chrysostom, "of preserving benefits, is the remembrance of them and gratitude for them, and nothing is more acceptable to God than a grateful soul; for, while He daily overloads us with innumerable benefits, He asks nothing for them, but that we thank Him for them." Therefore, my dear Christian, by no means forget

to thank God in the morning and evening, before and after meals. As often as you experience the blessing of God in your house, in your children, and your whole property, thank God, but particularly when you take in the fruits of the earth (*Lev.* xxiii. 10.); by this you will always bring upon yourself new blessings and new graces. "We cannot think, say, or write anything better or more pleasing to God," says St. Augustine, "than: thanks be to God."

ASPIRATION. O most gracious Jesus! who, as an example to us, wast always grateful to Thy Heavenly Father, as long as Thou didst live upon earth, grant, that I may always thank God for all His benefits, according to Thy example and the teaching of Thy servant St. Paul. (*Col.* iii. 17.)

INSTRUCTION ON THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY ORDERS.

Go, show yourselves to the priests. (*Luke* xvii. 14.)

Such honor did God show to the priests of the Old Law, that He sent the lepers to them, although they could in no wise contribute to the removal of leprosy. What honor, therefore, do the priests of the New Law deserve, who through the sacerdotal ordination have not only received from God the power to free mankind from the leprosy of the soul, but also far higher privileges.

Is the priesthood a special and holy state, selected by God?

Yes; this is evident from the writings of the Old as well as of the New Testament, and is confirmed by holy apostolic tradition. God Himself selected a particular race in the Mosaic law—Aaron and his descendants—from among the tribes of Juda, to perform the public service solemnly, to pray for the people, and instruct them in matters of religion (*Exod.* xxviii. 1. *et seqq.; Lev.* ix. 7.; i. *Kings* ii. 28 *seqq.*), but particularly to offer the daily sacrifices (*Lev.* i. 11.; *Numb.* xviii.), for which offices they were consecrated for seven days, by different significant ceremonies, ordained by God. (*Exod.* xxviii. 4 *&c. ib.* xxix.) Besides these, God instituted a sort of minor priests, Levites, for the service of the temple and of God (*Num.* iii. 12.; viii. 6—18.); they were of the tribe of Levi, and received no land like the other tribes, but lived on the offerings and tithes, and were consecrated like the priests. (*Num.* xviii. 21.; viii. 6—26.) This priesthood, an emblem of the real priesthood of the New Testament, was not abolished by Christ, but He brought it to its fulfilment and completed it, since He did not come to take away the law, but to fulfil it. For this reason Christ selected twelve apostles and seventy two disciples from among the faithful, at the commencement of His public life, and He said to them: I have chosen you, and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit. (*John*

xv. 16.) He gave them power to free man from sin, to sanctify and reconcile him with God. (*Matt.* xviii. 18.) He commanded them to preach His gospel to all nations (*Matt.* xxviii. 18—20.), and to offer up His holy Sacrifice. (*Luke* xxii. 19.) Just as the apostles were chosen by Christ, so afterwards by the Holy Ghost St. Paul was chosen to be an apostle, and he calls himself a minister of Christ and a dispenser of the mysteries of God (i. *Cor.* iv. 1.; *Tit.* i. 7.), and who together with Barnabas was ordained. (*Acts* xiii. 2, 3.) In the same manner the apostles chose their successors, and ordained them (i. *Tim.* iv. 14.; ii. *Tim.* i. 16.), and even appointed seven deacons, as assistants in the priestly office. (*Acts* vi. 1-3.) From these clear testimonies of holy Writ, it is evident, that, as God in the Old Testament, so Christ in the New Testament chose a particular class of men, and established certain grades among them, for the government of His Church, for the service of God, and the salvation of the faithful, as holy apostolic tradition also confirms. Already the earliest fathers, Ignatius and Clement, disciples of the apostles, write of bishops, priests, and deacons, as holy Writ calls them, who are destined for the service of God and the faithful. Subdeacons, ostiariates, lectors, exorcists, and acolytes, are mentioned by St. Gregory of Nazianzen, St. Justin, St. Cyprian, and many others, but particularly by the Council of Carthago in the year 398, which also gives the manner of ordaining priests.

The heretics, indeed, contend that the Roman Catholic Church robs the true believers of their dignity, since she grants the priesthood only to a certain class, and give as proofs of their assertion two texts, where St. Peter (i. *Pet.* ii. 9.) calls the faithful a kingly priesthood, and where St. John (*Apoc.* i. 6.) says, that Christ made us kings and priests. But these texts only speak of an internal priesthood, according to which every Christian, sanctified by baptism, who is in the state of grace, and consequently justified, and a living member of Christ, the great High Priest, should offer spiritual sacrifices,*) that is, good works, such as prayer, mortification, charity, penance, &c., on the altar of the heart, as also St. Peter (i. *Pet.* ii. 5.), St. Paul (*Rom.* xii. 1.), and David (*Ps.* l. 19.) teach. If the assertion of the heretics, that all believers are priests, were true, why did God in the Old Law already institute an especial priesthood, why did Christ and the apostles choose suitable men for the service of God? If all believers must be priests, why are not all kings, since St. John says, that Christ has made us kings? God, on the contrary, severely punished those who presumed to arrogate to themselves a priestly office, as He has done to King Ozias, who was afflicted by Him with leprosy, because he burnt incense in the temple, which the priests were alone permitted to do. (ii. *Paralip.* xxvi.)

*) See the Instruction on Sacrifice on the fifth Sunday after Pentecost, and on Rational Worship on the first Sunday after Epiphany.

Of course heretics must make this assertion; for since they say, that Scripture is the only rule of faith, and that every one can explain it, for what purpose are preachers necessary? And since they have no sacrifice, and with the exception of baptism, no Sacraments, for what purpose should they want priests? But since the sacrifice of Jesus is to continue in the Catholic Church until the end of time, since all the Sacraments, instituted by Christ, are still dispensed in her, and the command of Christ to teach all nations, must be carried out by her, therefore there must be priests chosen and destined, who will perform the ministry of the Lord, and these must not only be chosen, but also be consecrated for this by a special Sacrament.

What is meant by Holy Orders?

Holy Orders is a Sacrament, instituted by Christ, by which a certain spiritual power and particular grace to administer spiritual duties rightly and holily, is conferred upon men properly called, who give themselves to the service of the Church.

What is the external sign, by which grace is communicated to the priests?

The imposition of the bishop's hands, and the giving of the chalice with bread and wine, together with the words necessary to change it into the true body and blood of Christ, and to forgive or retain sins. (*Conc. Flor. in Decr. Eug. et Trid. Sess.* 14. *c.* 3. *de poen. et Sess.* 22. *c.* 1.)

When did Christ institute this Sacrament?

At the Last Supper, when, having changed bread and wine into His body and blood, He said: Do this for a commemoration of me, and when after His resurrection He said to them: As the Father hath sent me, I also send you (to free mankind from sin and to sanctify it), and then breathing upon them, gave them the Holy Ghost, and the power to forgive or retain sins. (*John* xx. 21—23.)

Have Holy Orders always been regarded as a Sacrament in the Church?

Yes, for St. Paul admonishes his disciple Timothy (i. *Tim.* iv. 14.) not to neglect the grace conferred upon him by the imposition of the hands of the priesthood (bishops), and in another place he admonishes him (ii. *Tim.* i. 6.) to stir up the grace, which was in him by the imposition of his (St. Paul's) hands. From this it follows, that St. Paul believed, that the external sign of the imposition of hands of the bishops and the priests conferred a particular grace, wherein, indeed, the essence of a Sacrament consists. Therefore the Council of Trent (*Sess.* 23. *de ord. can.* 3.) declares those anathema, who contend, that Holy Orders is not a real and true Sacrament, instituted by Christ, but only a human

invention, or a certain form of electing the ministers of the Word of God and the Sacraments.

Are those called to the priesthood, ordained immediately?

No, they are only admitted to the Holy Orders, of which there are seven, and after which they are priests, a rigid examination having been made of their knowledge in the sacred sciences, and a careful investigation, instituted into their vocation and their moral conduct.

What are these Orders?

They are the four minor and the three sacred Orders, hence so many steps to the sublime dignity of the priesthood. But first he, who dedicates himself to the sacerdotal state, and has received admission into it, receives the tonsure, which consists in this, that the bishop, or his representative, cuts off the hair from four parts of the head and invests him with a white surplice to remind him, that he must henceforth renounce the vanities of the world and follow Christ, the thorncrowned King, with spotless purity, wherefore clerics wear a shaven crown. When the one destined for the priesthood, has thus been made a cleric, that is, one who has taken God and His holy service for his portion, and only finds pleasure in spiritual and heavenly things, he then receives the four minor Orders. By these the bishop gives him 1) the office of ostiariate, or doorkeeper, by which the furniture of the Church, and the closing and unclosing of it is confided to him; 2) the lectorship, or duty of reading, which empowers him to read from the Scriptures or Fathers in the Church, and to bless bread and fruits; 3) the power of exorcising the evil spirits, which enables him to free those possessed by the devil, by means of the imposition of hands and prayer; 4) the office of acolyte, or torch-bearer, whose duty it is to light the candles at the divine service, to carry them, and to present wine and water at the holy Sacrifice.

After a certain time and after renewed probation he, who has received minor Orders, is admitted to the sacred Orders, which are:

1) Subdeaconship, by which he is entitled to assist the deacon at solemn Mass, to sing the epistle, to wash the altar-linen, to present the chalice and paten at the altar, &c.;

2) Deaconship, by which he receives the authority to preach, to sing the gospel, to baptize, to give holy Communion, &c. — All these orders are given by the bishop with many prayers, full of unction, and by the presentation of different ecclesiastical instruments and sacerdotal vestments. When the cleric has received all these orders:

3) the plenitude of power is finally given him by the order of priesthood, in as much as with many prayers, instructions, and admonitions, the hands of the bishop are imposed upon him, his

hands are anointed with holy chrism, the chalice with wine and water, and the paten with the host are presented to him, and thus power is given him to bless, to preside, to preach, to dispense the Sacraments, and to offer up the holy Sacrifice which he, after the ordination, offers together with the bishop for the first time to almighty God.

Learn from this instruction to honor and respect the priests, whose dignity as representatives of God and dispensers of His mysteries, surpasses all human dignity; upon whom a load, too heavy even for angels, as St. Chrysostom says, has been imposed, namely the care of your immortal soul; who daily enter the sanctuary before the face of the Lord, to offer the immaculate Lamb of God for the propitiation of the Almighty; to whom Jesus confided the merits of His most precious blood, in order to cleanse your soul therewith in the tribunal of penance, if you confess your sins contritely: of whom God will one day ask the strictest account. Honor, therefore, these ministers of God, pray daily for the assistance of heaven in their difficult calling; particularly on the Ember-days implore God, that He may send pious and zealous priests; and if, perhaps, you know a bad priest, do not despise his high dignity which is indelibly imprinted on him, have compassion on him, pray for him, and consider that Jesus has said of such: "All whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do: but according to their works do ye not. (*Matt.* xxiii. 3.)

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

T the Introit of the Mass excite in yourself an ardent desire for heaven with these words: Behold, O God, our protector: and look on the face of thy Christ: for better is one day in thy courts above thousands. How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord. (*Ps.* lxxxiii.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Preserve, O Lord, we beseech Thee, Thy Church by Thy constant mercy: and since our weak mortality is continually falling without Thy assistance, may Thy grace withdraw it from what is hurtful, and direct it in the ways of salvation. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Gal.* v. 16—24.) Brethren: Walk in the spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. For the

flesh lusteth against the spirit: and the spirit against the flesh: for these are contrary one to another: so that you do not the things that you would. But if you are led by the spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are, fornication, uncleanness, immodesty, luxury, idolatry, witchcrafts, enmities, contentions, emulations, wraths, quarrels, dissensions, sects, envy, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. Of the which I foretell you, as I have foretold to you, that they who do such things, shall not obtain the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity. Against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's, have crucified their flesh with the vices and concupiscences.

What is it to walk in the spirit?

It is to obey the inspirations of the Holy Ghost always and in all things. He who does this, says St. Paul, will not do the evil works of the flesh, which are here enumerated, but he will rather suppress and mortify all sensual desires, in this manner crucify his flesh together with its vices and lusts, and make himself worthy of the fruits of the Holy Ghost, which are likewise here enumerated; he will belong to Christ, and assure himself of his eternal happiness. On the contrary, he who lives according to the flesh, that is, gives way to the desires of the flesh and commits the things here described, has no hope of salvation.

It is strange, that all Christians wish to belong to Christ and become heirs of His kingdom, but few wish to crucify the flesh and its lusts, though Christ says to all: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself (battle with his evil inclinations), and take up his cross and follow me. (*Matt.* xvi. 24.)

ASPIRATION. Intercede for me, O St. Paul, that God may give me the grace to crucify my flesh together with its lusts, and thus I may have part with thee in Christ.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* vi. 24—33.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: No man can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one, and love the other: or he will sustain the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say to you, be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than the meat, and the body

more than the raiment? Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow, nor do they reap, nor gather into barns, and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they? And which of you, by taking thought, can add to his stature one cubit? And for raiment why are you solicitous? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow: they labour not, neither do they spin. But I say to you, that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. And if the grass of the field, which is to-day and to-morrow is cast into the oven, God doth so clothe, how much more you, O ye of little faith? Be not solicitous therefore, saying,

what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the heathens seek. For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God, and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you.

What is meant by serving God?

It means to do the will of God, or to perform all that God asks of us in our age and condition, faithfully and zealously for love of Him.

Who are the two masters, whom we cannot serve alike?

God and mammon, or riches, whereby also the other goods and pleasures of the world are understood. These we cannot serve at the same time, because they command things diametrically opposed to each other; for instance, God prohibits usury, theft, deceit, &c.; the desire for wealth impels to them. God commands, that we should keep holy Sundays and Holidays, and spend them in His service; the desire for riches tempts man to omit religious worship and to seek temporal gain; it makes man restless in the Church, so that he is only present with his body, but with the heart he remains with his temporal goods and business.

To whom can riches be useful?

To those who like so many saints perform works of mercy with them, and thus lay up a treasure for themselves in heaven.

Why does Christ call our attention to the birds of the air and the lilies of the field?

In order to excite in us confidence in the providence of God, which preserves even the birds and the flowers. Surely, if God feeds the young ravens which cry to Him (*Ps.* cxlvi. 9.), if He nourishes the birds which neither sow, nor reap, nor gather in barns, if He vests the flowers of the field so beautifully: how much more will He care for men, whom He has made to His own image and likeness, and whom He has made His children, if they only act as His children, keep His commandments, and always entertain a filial confidence in Him.

Should we, therefore, lay aside all care and never work?

This does not follow from what has been said. Christ only condemns the superfluous cares, which cause man to forget God and to neglect the salvation of his soul. Besides, God has Himself ordered (*Gen.* iii. 17—19.), that man should eat the fruits of the earth with much labor, that he should earn his bread with the sweat of his brow, and St. Paul says: If any man will not work, neither let him eat. (ii. *Thess.* iii. 10.)

What can take away superfluous cares?

A firm and living faith, that God can and will help us. That He can do it, is evident, because He is almighty; that He will do it, is certain, because He promises it in so many passages of holy Writ, and because He is infinitely faithful in all His promises. Christ encourages us to this lively confidence with these words: All things whatsoever you ask when ye pray, believe that you shall receive them, and they shall come unto you. (*Mark.* xi. 24.) Therefore the apostle also commands us to throw all cares upon the Lord, who cares for us. (i. *Pet.* v. 7.) And why should God not care for us, since He sent us His Son and with Him all; for which reason St. Augustine says: "How can you doubt, that God will give you good things, since He vouchsafed to assume evil for you!"

PRAYER. O Lord Jesus! give me a firm confidence in Thy Divine Providence, and increase it daily in me, that I may confidently believe in all my concerns, that if I above all seek the kingdom of God and His justice, the rest shall be added unto me.

CONSOLATION IN POVERTY.

Be not solicitous for your life. (*Matt.* vi. 25.)

IF you are born in poverty, or through any accident, or through your own fault fall into poverty, console yourself, because God has sent you this poverty for your own good; for good things and evil, life and death, poverty and riches, are from God. (*Eccl.* xi. 14.) Therefore receive it without impatience or murmuring from the hand of God as a means by which He wishes to keep you from forgetting Him which would, perhaps, happen if He were to bless you with temporal prosperity. For riches and good living are a source of destruction for many. If you have brought poverty upon yourself by a licentious and sinful life, receive it in a spirit of penance as a just and salutary chastisement, and thank God, that He gives you a chance to do penance for your sins. But if poverty has come upon you without your fault, console yourself with the saints, of whom St. Paul says, that they bear the unjust taking away of their goods with joy, because they know that a better and unchangeable treasure is in store for them in heaven. (*Hebr.* x. 34.) But particularly ought the example of Christ to console you, who, since He was rich, became poor for us (ii. *Cor.* viii. 9.), and had not a place wherein to lay His head. (*Matt.* viii. 20.)

In your distress say often with Job (i. 21.): The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away: as it pleased the Lord, so it is done: blessed be the name of the Lord. Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I

return thither. Fear not, my son, says Tobias, we lead indeed a poor life, but we shall have many good things, if we fear God, and depart from all sins, and do that which is good. (*Tob.* iv. 23.) To serve God and to be content with few things, always brings rich reward, if not in this, at least in the next life. Therefore Christ promised the kingdom of heaven to the poor in spirit, that is, not only to the humble, but also to the poor who imitate Christ in all patience and resignation. Follow, therefore, the poor Jesus, follow His poor mother, by imitating their example, and you will possess the kingdom of heaven.

INSTRUCTION CONCERNING USURY.

You cannot serve God and mammon.
(*Matt.* vi. 24.)

USury is to demand more than legal interest from our neighbor, to whom we have lent something, or who is otherwise indebted to us. Those are also commonly called usurers, who, in times of want, hoard up necessary food, such as grain, flour, &c., and only sell them at the highest price; or who buy up all such articles to sell it to the needy for enormous prices. — Usury is a grievous sin, and usurers are threatened with eternal death, and Christ expressly prohibits lending with usury. (*Luke* vi. 34, 35.)

Usurers are the real bloodsuckers of the poor, whom they rob of their sweat and blood, and since they transgress the natural law, but still more the divine law, which commands us to love our neighbor and to be merciful to the needy, they will surely not possess the kingdom of heaven. Would the hard-hearted usurers only consider this, and take to heart the words of Christ: What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul! (*Matt.* xvi. 26.)

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

THE Introit of the Mass is a fervent prayer, which may be said in every necessity and adversity: Bow down thy ear, O Lord, and hear me: save thy servant, O my God, who hopeth in thee: have mercy on me, O Lord, for I have cried to thee all the day. Give joy to the soul of thy servant: for to thee, O Lord, I have lifted up my soul. (*Ps.* lxxxv.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. May Thy continual mercy purify and defend Thy Church: and since without Thee it

cannot be safe, may it always be directed by the influence of Thy grace. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Gal.* v. 25, 26.; vi. 1—10.) BRETHREN: If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be made desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. Brethren, if a man be overtaken in any fault, you, who are spiritual, instruct such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens: and so you shall fulfil the law of Christ. For if any man think himself to be something, whereas he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every one prove his own work, and so he shall have glory in himself only, and not in another. For every one shall bear his own burden. And let him, that is instructed in the word, communicate to him, that instructeth him, in all good things. Be not deceived, God is not mocked. For what things a man shall sow, those also shall he reap. For he that soweth in his flesh, of the flesh also shall reap corruption. But he, that soweth in the spirit, of the spirit shall reap life everlasting. And in doing good, let us not fail. For in due time we shall reap not failing. Therefore, whilst we have time, let us work good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

EXPLANATION. This epistle is taken, like that of Sunday before last, from the epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians, in which St. Paul shows them the insufficiency of the Jewish law, and that they can only be saved by a lively faith in Christ, but now he admonishes them to carry out this faith in good works. You now live, he tells them, in the Spirit, that is, the Holy Ghost animates your hearts by His grace, enlightens, confirms, and inflames you, admonishes and teaches you, impels your hearts to do good; you must, therefore, also regulate your external conduct accordingly, and you must particularly devote yourself to the practice of humility and charity, as the foundations of a truly spiritual life. Humility must teach and move you to have a little opinion of yourself, that you avoid vain glory, and do not confide in your own strength. But charity should impel you to be meek and compassionate to all, even sinners, to correct them charitably, and lead them back to the path of virtue; since he who is harsh to the erring, despises them, and treats them roughly, is often permitted by the permission of God to fall into the same, nay, often even greater sins.

Particularly you must show your charity for one another, that one bears the burdens of another: that you bear the faults and imperfections of others just as patiently, as you wish others to bear with your own imperfections; thus you will fulfil the law of Christ, which commands us to love our neighbor; you will prevent many sins which come into existence, when we consider ourselves perfect, without blemish, and, therefore, raise ourselves above others, criticise their failings, and cause disturbance. He who acts thus, deceives himself, and is no credit to himself. True glory consists in this, that we learn to know ourselves, our faults, and inclinations always better, that we battle with them and lay them aside, since every one has enough faults to correct in himself. Be also grateful to those who instruct you in the word of God, and give them some of your goods. Do not deceive yourselves, however, with regard to what has been said concerning the manner of living as a true Christian, God will not be trifled with. For what you sow, you shall reap; if you only follow the dictates of the desires of the flesh, do not mortify yourselves, do not correct your failings, and do indulge your sinful appetites, you will one day reap death, destruction, and damnation, whereas, on the contrary, if you follow the dictates of the Holy Ghost and do good untiringly, you will reap of the Spirit of life.

Let us obey this doctrine, for it is also of interest to us, and impress deeply on our heart, that without mortification of body and soul we cannot be saved.

ASPIRATION. O St. Paul! beg of God the grace for me, that I may always walk in humility and the love of my neighbor, particularly in bearing with his imperfections and failings, and thus fulfil the law of Christ in this as well as in all things.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* vii. 11—16.) At that time: Jesus went into a city called Naim: and there went with him his disciples, and a great multitude. And when he came nigh to the city, behold, a dead man was carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow: and much people of the city were with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said to her: Weep not. And he came near and touched the bier. And they that carried it, stood still. And he said: Young man, I say to thee, arise. And he that was dead, sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother. And there came a fear on them all: and they glorified God, saying: A great prophet is risen up amongst us, and God hath visited his people.

Why did Christ show compassion to this widow?

To convince us, that God takes sorrowful and destitute widows under His protection, and is to them a consoler and helper; and to teach us to do the same. Woe, therefore, to those who instead of consoling and supporting widows and orphans, rather oppress them, and cause them to weep. The tears and cries of widows will rise up to God, who will terribly punish the injuries inflicted upon them. (*Exod.* xxii. 22 *&c.*)

Christ had still other reasons for compassion, for He saw in this deceased youth the death of sinners, and in the afflicted mother the pain which the Church, our mother, experiences at the loss of so many of her children, who are tempted by the evil spirit and the corrupt world to all vices, or who are infected by the spirit of lies and error, and exclude themselves from salvation.

This was the principal cause which moved our Saviour to compassion, and this should also awaken our compassion. If we are faithful children of our mother, the Church, it is impossible for us not to share her sorrow, and we would surely not be her children, and even spiritually dead, if we could without sorrow contemplate how many daily die spiritually by sins of all sorts, and so many who are partly already captives of the darkness of error and become partly seduced to error, and thus, separated from the living body of Christ, hasten to eternal destruction. O let us pray daily without ceasing with the Church to Jesus, that He may raise sinners from their terrible spiritual death, may enlighten those in error, so that all may recognize the truth, and find and walk the path which leads to life!

Why did Christ say to the widow: Weep not?

He wished to moderate her excessive sorrow, and to teach us, that we should not be sorrowful over the loss of our relatives, like the heathens who have no hope of resurrection to eternal life. (*Thess.* iv. 12.) Patient resignation to the will of God becomes the Christian, who believes and hopes in a resurrection, and this with prayer and good works will be more useful to the deceased than many tears.

What else do we learn from this gospel?

That no one, be he ever so young and healthy, is safe from death, wherefore we should always be prepared to die.

INSTRUCTION CONCERNING DEATH.

IF there were locked up in a prison several hundred persons, over whom sentence of death had been irrevocably pronounced, and of whom none knew the day or hour of death; if in the mean time one after the other, and often he who least thought of it, was taken out to be executed; would not every one's heart tremble, whenever the prison-door was opened? Now the irrevocable sentence of death is pronounced over us all; we are all locked up in our bodies, as in a prison (*Ps.* cxiv. 8.); one after the other is taken out, and yet we do not care in the least for it. We live as though we could live forever; we think only of the body, that it is well; only for this we heap up wealth, but for the soul nothing is done, except that we load it with sins and vices.

Is this rational? The body will be food for worms, but the soul (without knowing, when) will travel into the house of eternity, to which place she must bring treasures of good works, or must already have brought them, in order to live happy for all eternity. Who would, therefore, be so foolish and daring as to care for the body during life, and neglect the salvation of the soul?

O man, says St. Francis of Sales (*Phil. part.* i. *chap.* 13.), represent to yourself in lively colors, that at your death the world

will cease to exist with respect to you. For you there will no longer be any world; you will see how it perishes before your eyes. For in that last hour the pleasures, the vanities, the riches, the honors, the friendships, and all which were dear to you, will disappear before your eyes as so many shadows. Ah! fool that I am! you will then say, for what trifles and fooleries have I lost all! On the contrary piety, good works, penance, &c., will appear pleasant to you, and you will exclaim: O, why did I not travel on this blessed road! Then the sins which you consider as mere trifles, will seem to you like mountains, and all that you thought you had accomplished as great things, with regard to piety, will seem to you very little.

What terrible fear will then seize your soul, when she must all alone travel into the bottomless abyss of eternity, which, as St. Bernard says, devours all possible imaginable ages, and of which St. Gregory says, that we can easier say, what it is not than what it is. What terrors will befall her, when she must appear before the tribunal of God, whom she never really loved and honored in her life-time, and before whom she must now give the strictest account, and hear an irrevocable and just sentence!

Should these thoughts not make an impression upon you? But how can you escape this terrible condition? By this, that you now live, as you would wish to have lived at the hour of death. Learn the science of dying a good death in your life-time, it is the highest science which we can practise only once. Die daily with St. Paul, in as much as you crucify the flesh and its lusts, and voluntarily withdraw your heart from the world, its pomps and vanities, before death will do this with violence; for, says a wise and pious man: "He who dies, before he dies, will not die, when he dies."

PRAYER. O world! because I cannot know the hour, in which I must leave you, I will not be attached to you. O you dear friends and relatives, you, too, I will in future love only with a holy inclination, directed to God, which will not cease with death, but remain forever. O Lord! help me, that I may die totally to myself and the world, and live only for Thee, and partake of eternal happiness.

INSTRUCTION ON THE CEREMONIES USED AT FUNERALS.

Behold, a dead man was carried out, the only son of his mother—and much people were with her.

(*Luke* vii. 12.)

OF these people who accompanied the funeral of the youth, we should learn to give the last honor to the death, and

accompany their bodies to the grave, which is a meritorious work and one pleasing to God (*Tob.* i. 20, 21.; ii. 3.), if it be not performed from vanity and selfinterest, but from a good motive and for love of God and the deceased, in order to assist him by prayer. Therefore those do very wrong, who from worldly motives either omit this good work entirely, or during the funeral procession indulge in vain talk and grudge the deceased even a short prayer.

Why is a cross carried before the dead body?

By this is indicated, that the deceased during life professed Christ, died in the faith in Him, and hopes for resurrection through Him.

Why are lighted candles carried before the bier?

By this the Church wishes to represent her desire, that the deceased may be received into the eternal light through the grace of God, and that we should, therefore, pray for him. This custom is very ancient, for St. Cyprian who was beheaded for Christ's sake, in the year 258 after Christ, was buried with wax-candles and torches, with prayer and great solemnity. (*Ruinart.*)

Why are the coffin and the grave sprinkled with holy water?

In order, as St. Thomas Aquinas (*Lib.* iii. *art.* 21.) remarks, to implore God that, on account of the prayers which the Church says when she blesses the water, the souls of the faithful may be cleansed from all stains, and may receive consolation and refreshment in the tortures, which they may still have to suffer.

Why are the body and the grave incensed?

By this the Church indicates, that the deceased by his Christian calling was a sweet perfume of Christ (ii. *Cor.* ii. 14, 15.), and admonishes the faithful, that they should send up their prayers to heaven like incense for the deceased.

Why are Psalms and other sacred canticles sung?

This is done to remind us of the teaching of St. Paul (i. *Thess.* iv. 12.), not to be excessively sorrowful for the loss of the deceased, like the heathens who have no hope of a resurrection to eternal life. We also signify, thereby, that we congratulate the dead for the peace which they now enjoy. (*Apoc.* iii.) This custom as St. Jerome shows (*Ep.* 53.), is derived from the apostles, who interred St. Stephen with Psalms and hymns of praise.

Why are the bells rung?

To invite the faithful to the funeral and to pray for the dead, who, during his life-time, was called very often by the same bells, prayed with and for us during religious worship, and who is not separated from us by death.

Why are the bodies of the faithful buried with the head towards the East, and those of the priests towards the West?

The faithful are buried towards the East, whence the sun rises, to indicate, that they are waiting for Christ who is called the Orient from on High (*Luke* i. 78.), and whose voice they will hear at the end of the world, when He calls them to the resurrection; the priests towards the West, as a sign, that on the day of judgment they will be placed opposite to the souls, confided to them, to give an account of their charge, and to bear judgment for or against them.

Why is a cross or monument erected over the grave?

To show that the deceased was a follower of Christ, the Crucified, and to admonish the passers by to pray for him, and to remind us of the just moment of death.

Why is the body laid in consecrated ground, near the Church?

This is done through reverence for the bodies of the dead which are, by baptism, temples of the Holy Ghost; to show that, even in death, they still belong to the communion of that holy Church, in which they were embodied during life by baptism, and clung to it in faith even until death; to inspire the surviving with a holy fear from profaning the graves.

Why is the solemn funeral service of the Church denied to heretics?

Because they would not belong to the Church during life, and despised the holy customs and prayers of the Church for the dead. How should the blessing and prayer of the Church be useful in death to one, who despises them during life?

Why does the Church not permit criminals and suicides to be buried in consecrated ground?

In order to express her horror for the crimes perpetrated by them, and to deter the faithful from committing similar actions.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

T the Introit of the Mass implore with great confidence the mercy of God in the words of *Ps.* lxxxv.: Have mercy on me O Lord, for I have cried to thee all the day: for thou, O Lord, art sweet and mild, and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon thee. Bow down thy ear, O Lord, and hear me: for I am needy and poor. Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. May Thy grace, O Lord, always prevent and follow us; and make us constantly zealous in the practice of good works. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Ephes.* iii. 13—21.) BRETHREN: I pray you not to faint at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. For this cause I bow my knee to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom all paternity in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened by his Spirit with might unto the inward man. That Christ may dwell by faith in your hearts: that being rooted and founded in charity, you may be able to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length, and height and depth: to know also the charity of Christ, which surpasseth all knowledge, that you may be filled unto all the fulness of God. Now to him who is able to do all things more abundantly than we desire or understand, according to the power that worketh in us: to him be glory in the Church, and in Christ Jesus, unto all generations world without end.

EXPLANATION. In the epistle of the following Sunday St. Paul tells us, that he was at the time of writing this letter in prison at Rome, whither he was brought upon the false accusations of the Jews. From prison he wrote to the Ephesians, whom he had converted to Christianity, and who zealously obeyed his counsels, in order to confirm them in their zeal and to console them with regard to his sufferings which he bore for Christ's sake. These sufferings which I bear, he writes, redound to your honor, since I, your spiritual father, am considered by God worthy to suffer like His Son; yes, I thank the Father of your Lord Jesus for it, and beg Him on my knees, that He will vouchsafe to strengthen you with His Holy Spirit, so that you may overcome your evil inclinations and passions, cleanse your hearts more and more, and sanctify your souls, that if you live thus according to your faith, you may be made the habitations of Christ. He begs God also to give them a well grounded charity, which not only loves God on account of the reward, but also on account of our sufferings, thus to become like to Christ, the Crucified. By this constant love for Jesus, even in adversities, we only comprehend with the saints the greatness of the love of Jesus, the Crucified, its breadth, since all the members of His body, all the powers of His soul were tormented with all sorts of tortures, on account of the sins of all men; the length, since He had all these sufferings for thirty three years before His eyes, and bore them in His soul; the depth, since these tortures surpassed in intensity all which men ever suffered

or will suffer; the height, since Christ on the cross saw, with the most perfect knowledge, the awful malice of each single sin, and the terrible insult offered to the sublime Majesty of God, and He bore the punishment for them in Himself, and did penance for them. Other holy fathers say, that by these words the whole mystery of our redemption is to be understood, and, indeed, the breadth thereof is, that it is for all men; the length, that it lasts for all centuries, and reaches into eternity; the height, that its contemplation takes us away from the earth and raises us to heaven; the depth, that it even penetrates down to the kingdom of the dead. By contemplating these mysteries we learn to know the infinite love of God, to love Him more and more, and thus make ourselves partakers of God's graces.—Obey the teaching of this holy apostle, contemplate the suffering Saviour and His love, endeavor to become like to Him by suffering, and when you see, how the Church, her ministers, the bishops and priests, are persecuted and in tribulation, be not disheartened, but consider that the discipleship of Jesus consists particularly in suffering, that, therefore, the Church and her ministers must suffer, since their head, Jesus, has suffered. The holy Church has borne the crown of thorns of Jesus for eighteen hundred years and drank from His chalice; but like Jesus, her Head, she will triumph over all her enemies, and whilst these are hastening to destruction, she will continually live victorious until the end of time, and will triumph eternally in heaven.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xiv. 1—11.) At that time: When Jesus went into the house of one of the chief of the Pharisees on the Sabbath-day to eat bread, they watched him. And behold, there was a certain man before him that had the dropsy. And Jesus answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees saying: Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day? But they held their peace. But he taking him, healed him, and sent him away. And answering them, he said: Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fall into a pit; and will not immediately draw him out on the Sabbath-day? And they could not answer him to these things. And he spoke a parable also to them that were invited, marking how they chose the first seats at the table, saying to them: When thou art invited to a wedding, sit not down in the first place, lest perhaps one more honourable than thou be invited by him; and he that invited thee and him, come and say to thee, Give this man place, and then thou begin with shame to take the

lowest place. But when thou art invited, go, sit down in the lowest place: that when he who invited thee cometh, he may say to thee, Friend, go up higher. Then shalt thou have glory before them that sit at table with thee: because every one that exalteth himself, shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted.

Why did Jesus dine with the Pharisees?

To take occasion from this, as St. Cyril says, to instruct them, that it is allowed to heal the sick on the Sabbath, and to show, how those who give invitations to a supper, and those who are invited, should conduct themselves. The Pharisees' invitation to Jesus was not actuated by kindness, but by the desire to find

something in His actions, which they might criticise; but Jesus approaches them with meekness and endeavors to inspire them with a better intention. Beware of the spirit of criticism, and like Jesus make use of every occasion to do good even to your enemies.

Who may be understood by the dropsical man?

The debauchees and misers; for as a dropsical person always wishes to drink more, the more he has already drunk, so the debauched always wish more and more for the shameful gratification of their lusts, the more they have indulged in them, and the miserly for goods and riches, the more they have. And just as the dropsical are hard to cure, so the debauched and miserly are hard to convert.

Why is covetousness classed among the seven deadly sins?

Because it is the root of all evil (i. *Tim.* vi. 10.), for it leads to usury, theft, to the employment of false weights and measures, to the suppression of justice in courts, to perjury, to the oppression of widows and orphans, nay, even to the denial of faith, as was the case with Judas. Therefore the apostle says: They who would become rich, fall into temptation, and into the snare of the devil, and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires, which drown men in destruction and perdition; and admonishes us: to fly these things, and pursue justice, piety, faith, charity, patience, meekness. (i. *Tim.* vi. 9, 11.)

A powerful remedy against avarice is to consider, that we are not owners of what we possess, and shall not take the least thing with us in death, and shall have to render a strict account of the use to which we put our riches. (i. *Tim.* vi. 7.)

INSTRUCTION ON KEEPING SUNDAY HOLY.

Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day? (*Luke* xvi. 3.)

Why did Christ put this question?

BEcause the Jews, particularly the Pharisees, were so very superstitious in keeping the Sabbath, and because they would not recognize Jesus as the Messiah, because He healed on the Sabbath, which was a really good work. But if the Jews were so conscientious, through superstition and hypocrisy, in keeping the Sabbath, and considered the performing of an external good work on this day as a sin, some Christians, on the contrary, blinded by avarice and worldly pleasure, place themselves heedlessly, nay, insolently above the commandment to keep holy the Sunday, and do not consider those things sins, which are sins, sometimes even very grievous sins.

Consider, my dear Christian, you serve your body the whole week, you use all your powers for temporal business, to support yourself and your family, and God blesses you, if you work with a good intention. Now God chose one day in the week, Sunday, and in the year several other Holidays, which you should devote wholly to His service and the salvation of your soul; is it, therefore, not the greatest ingratitude, when you steal these days from God and your soul, and employ them for the gaining of a transient good or for the indulgence of vain, sinful pleasures? At certain times man gives rest to irrational animals, and you give the powers of your body and soul none of the rest they would and should find in quiet devotion, in prayer and meditation, in attending divine service, in receiving the holy Sacraments, &c. And if you enquire, whence these shameful violations of Sundays and Holidays come, you will find, that there is no other reason than love of gain and avarice, sinful love of pleasure, and often complete want of faith and confidence in God's providence. We wish to become rich by all means, and we do not reflect that this will not happen without the blessing of God, and that wealth is a net, in which thousands entangle themselves to their eternal perdition. We wish to live merrily and do ourselves good, but we do not consider, that our life-time is only a time of penance to attain that eternally blissful rest, of which Sunday is an emblem. We spend Sundays and Holidays in idleness, finery, vain conversations, buying and selling, servile work, or in still worse things, without experiencing the slightest scruple. But God will cover the violators of His sacred days with confusion and shame (*Malach.* ii. 3.), and permit all sorts of temporal evils to come upon them, als daily experience shows. For never can the blessing of God rest upon those who never care for it, but rather make themselves unworthy to receive it, by violating days, consecrated to God. Let this be a warning to you.

PRAYER. O best Saviour! how meekness and wisdom shine through all Thy words and actions! O, grant, that we may regulate all our actions in such a manner, that they will be acceptable to Thee and tend to the edification of our neighbor. Give us the grace to employ all Thy days, consecrated to Thee, for Thy honor and our salvation, that we may never raise ourselves above others, but follow Thee in all humility.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

N the Introit of the Mass the justice and mercy of God is praised: Thou art just, O Lord, and thy judgment is right: deal with thy servant according to thy mercy. Blessed are the undefiled in the way: who walk in the law of the Lord. (*Ps.* cxviii.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant we beseech Thee, O Lord, that Thy people may avoid all contagion of the devil: and with a clean heart follow thee, the only true God. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Ephes.* iv. 1—6.) BRETHREN: I who am a prisoner in the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation in which you are called. With all humility and mildness, with patience, supporting one another in charity. Careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. One body and one spirit; as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all, who is blessed for ever more.

ADMONITION. Implore God continually for the grace to accomplish and make certain your vocation by performing these virtues, recommended by St. Paul.

INSTRUCTION ON THE ONE ONLY SAVING FAITH.

One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. (*Ephes.* iv. 5.)

THese words of the great Apostle of the Gentiles show clearly, that it is not a matter of indifference, whether this or that faith, this or that religion is professed. Yet in our times, poor in faith, we so often hear the assertion from socalled enlightened men: "It is all the same to what religion we belong, we can be saved in any one, if we only believe in God and live uprightly." How impious is this assertion! Consider, my dear Christian, there is but one God, and this one God has sent only one Redeemer, and this one Redeemer has preached only one doctrine and established one Church. Had God wished that there should be more than one Church, then Jesus should have said so, He should have founded several Churches, nay, He should not have preached a

new doctrine, founded a new, Christian Church; for the Jews also believed in one God. But Jesus cast aside heathenism and Judaism, preached only one and, indeed, a new religion, founded only one Church. Nowhere does He speak of Churches, but always of one Church. He says that we must hear this Church, and does not add, that if we will not hear this Church, we may hear some other one. He speaks of only one shepherd, one flock, and one fold, into which all men are to be brought. In the same manner He speaks always of one kingdom of God on earth, just as there is only one kingdom of heaven; of only one master of the house and one family, of one field and one vineyard, whereby He understood His Church; of only one rock, upon which He would build His Church. On the day before His death, He prayed fervently to His Heavenly Father, that all who believe in Him, might be and remain one, as He and the Father are one, and He also gave His disciples the express command to preach His gospel to all nations, and to teach them all things, whatsoever He had commanded them. This command the apostles carried out exactly. Everywhere they preached one and the same doctrine, founded, indeed, in all places Christian communities, but which were united by the bond of the same faith. It was one of the principal cares of the apostles to prevent schisms in faith, they warned from heresy, commanded all originators of such to be avoided, and anathematised those who preached a gospel different from theirs. As the apostles so their successors. All the holy fathers speak with burning love of the necessary unity of faith, and deny those, who remain knowingly in schism and separation from the true Church of Jesus, all claim to salvation.

Learn from this, therefore, my dear Christian, that there can be but one true Church; but if there is but one true Church, it naturally follows, that in her alone salvation can be obtained, and the assertion, that we can be saved in any creed, is false and impious. Jesus who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, speaks of only one Church, which we must hear, if we wish to be saved. He who does not hear the Church, He says, should be considered as a heathen and publican. He speaks furthermore of one fold, and He promises eternal life only to those sheep who belong to this fold, obey the voice of the one shepherd and feed in His pasture. The apostles were also convinced, that only the one, true Church makes salvation certain. Without faith it is impossible to please God, writes St. Paul to the Hebrews (xi. 6.), and this faith is only one, he teaches the Ephesians. (iv. 5.) If the apostles had believed, that any religion can save man, they would certainly not have contended so strenuously for unity, they would not have declared so solemnly, that we cannot belong to any other than to Christ alone, and that we must receive and obey His doctrine. As the apostles their successors and all the fathers agree, that there is no salvation outside of the true Church.

St. Cyprian writes: "If any one outside Noah's ark could find safety, then also will one outside the Church find it." (*De unit. eccl. c.* 7.) From all this it follows, that there is only one true Church which gives salvation, outside of which there can be no salvation.

But which is this Church? Certainly only the Roman-Catholic, Apostolic Church, for she alone is founded by Christ, she alone is watered with the blood of the apostles and so many thousands of holy martyrs, she alone has the marks of the true Church of Jesus *[see the Instruction on the first Sunday after Easter]*, to which He has promised, that she shall, notwithstanding all the attacks of her enemies, stand to the end of the world. Those who fell away from the Church three hundred years ago, do, indeed, contend that the Church fell into error and no longer possessed the true, pure gospel of Jesus. Were they right, Jesus were to be blamed, for He founded this Church, He promised to remain with her and guide her through the Holy Ghost until the end of the world. He would, therefore, have broken His word, or He was not powerful enough to keep it. But who will say this? On the contrary, she has existed for eighteen hundred years, whilst the greatest and most powerful kingdoms have been mined, and the firmest thrones crumbled away. If she were not the only true and saving Church, founded by Christ, how could she have existed so long, since Jesus said, that every plant that His Heavenly Father has not planted, shall be rooted up? (*Matt.* xv. 13.) If she were not the Church of Christ, long ago would she be destroyed, but she still stands to-day, whilst her enemies who battled with her, have disappeared and shall disappear; for the gates of hell shall not prevail against her, says our Lord, and He has kept His word and will keep it, notwithstanding all the oppositions and calumnies of her implacable enemies.

You see, therefore, my dear Christian, that the Catholic Church is the only true and the only saving Church; do not let yourself be deceived by those who are neither cold nor warm, and who use these words: "We can be saved in any religion, if we only believe in God and live uprightly," and who wish to rob you of your holy faith, and precipitate you into the sea of doubt, error, and falsehood. Outside of the Catholic Church there is no salvation; this hold firmly, for it is the teaching of Jesus, His apostles, and all the fathers; for this doctrine the apostles and a countless host of the faithful have shed their blood; but obey the teaching of this Church, follow her laws, make use of her help and assistance, and often raise your hands and heart to heaven to thank God for the priceless grace of belonging to this one, true Church; forget not to pray for your erring brethren, who are still outside of the Church, that the Lord may lead them into her, that His promise may be fulfilled: There will be one fold and one shepherd.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxii. 34—46.) At that time: The Pharisees come to Jesus: and one of them, a doctor of the law, asked him, tempting him: Master, which is the great commandment of the law? Jesus said to him: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets. And the Pharisees being gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying: What think you of Christ? whose son is he? They say to him:

David's. He saith to them: How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying: The Lord said to my Lord, sit on my right hand until I make thy enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word; neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.

What is meant by loving God?

It means to find one's pleasure, happiness, and joy in God, because He is the highest and most perfect good; to rejoice in His infinite majesty and glory, to direct one's thoughts, words, and actions towards Him as our only end, to fulfil His will in all things, and be prepared always rather to lose everything, even life itself, than His friendship.

What is meant by loving God with our whole heart, our whole soul, &c.?

These different expressions all mean, principally, the same thing, namely, that we should cling to God with a true, sincere and heartfelt love. But by our heart our will may be understood, that power by which we wish God all happiness and glory, and desire nothing more than that He be known, loved, and honored, and His will accomplished by us and by all men, most perfectly. The intellect can be taken for the soul, with which we should endeavor to arrive at the knowledge and love of God, by means of meditation on all created things, and to praise and glorify Him above all things. The mind may signify our memory, with which we continually remember God and the innumerable benefits, bestowed on us by Him, praise Him for them, thank Him, and always walk irreproachably before His face. We love God, finally, with all our strength, if we employ all the motions of our body, of the five senses, of our hands and feet, tongue, &c., in the service of God, and direct all our actions to Him as our last end.

Is it also true love, if we love God only because He is good to us?

This is grateful love, which is good and praiseworthy, but it is not perfect love, because our selflove, selfinterest, and desires are present in it.

What, therefore, is perfect love?

It is this, when we love God only, because He is in Himself the Highest Good, and most worthy of all love. In this manner we should endeavor to love Him; not through selfinterest, not through hope of reward, not through fear of punishment, but only because He, as the Greatest Good, contains all goodness and, therefore, deserves to be loved only on account of Himself. Such love St. Francis Xavier had, who very beautifully expresses this love in the following canticle which he himself composed.

"My God, I love Thee, not because
I hope for heaven thereby,
Nor because they who love Thee not,
Must burn eternally!

Thou, O my Jesus, Thou didst me
Upon the cross embrace,
For me didst bear the nails and spear,
And manifold disgrace.

And griefs and torments numberless,
And sweat of agony;
Even death itself, and all for one
Who was Thine enemy!

Then why, O blessed Jesus Christ,
Should I not love Thee well;
Not for the sake of winning heaven,
Or of escaping hell.

Not with the hope of gaining aught,
Not seeking a reward,
But as Thyself hast loved me,
O ever loving Lord!

Yes, so I love Thee and will love,
And in Thy praise will sing;
Solely because Thou art my God
And my eternal King."

Can fear exist with love?

Servile fear cannot, but filial fear may. Servile fear is rather a fear of punishment than a fear of God, or a fear of offending Him. This fear cannot agree with the love of God; for in love, writes St. Augustine (*in Joann. Tr.* 9.), there is no fear, for perfect love casteth out fear. (i. *John* iv. 18.) Filial fear, on the contrary, is a fear of offending God, the kindest of fathers. This fear leads to love and is also an effect of love; yes, it is the beginning of wisdom. (*Eccl.* i. 27.) This fear, therefore, we should endeavor to obtain, for it will drive sins away from us, as keepers drive off thieves (*Eccl.* i. 11-13); it will rejoice us with joy and gladness, with glory and splendor and a long life, and obtain for us at the hour of our death the divine blessing and a divine death.

How may we obtain a perfect love of God?

By meditating on His infinite, divine perfections, His almighty power, His wisdom, His splendor, His beauty, &c.; by contemplating His bountless love for us, which He has shown us in the incarnation, sufferings, and death of His only begotten Son; by frequent practice of this virtue; by frequent prayer for it.

When should we practise the virtue of love of God?

As soon as we have come to the full use of reason, know God, and obtain an insight into reasons, why we must love Him; when the world, the devil, and the flesh, endeavor to withdraw us from the Only Good, God, by their apparent goods and pleasures; when we have separated ourselves from God by a mortal sin; when we receive the holy Sacraments, particularly holy Communion; when we receive a particular grace from God; when we use food and drink, and other permitted enjoyments; when we contemplate God's creatures; in the hour of death; often during the day, for which purpose we may use different acts of love, as they are to be found in good prayer-books.

[Concerning the love of our neighbor, see on the twelfth Sunday after Pentecost.]

Why is the commandment to love God and our neighbor called the greatest commandment?

Because in it are contained all the other commandments, and in it, as Christ says, consists the whole law. He therefore, who, fulfils this commandment, fulfils the whole law, and does all that is pleasing to God; for he who loves God with his heart, does not separate Himself from God by infidelity, does not practise public or private superstition and idolatry; he does not murmur against God, he does not desecrate the name of God by cursing and swearing; he does not profane the Sabbath, because he knows, that all this is displeasing to God. On the contrary, he hopes in God, keeps Sundays and Holidays holy, and keeps all the commandments of the Church, because God wishes, that we hear the Church; he honors his parents, inflicts no evil upon his neighbor; strikes and kills no one, does not commit adultery, does not steal, calumniates no one, does not bear false witness, does not judge rashly, is not envious, full of enmity, cruel, but rather practises the corporal and spiritual works of mercy; and he does all this, because he loves God and for God's sake his neighbor as himself.

"What think you of Christ?"

Thus Christ asked the Pharisees, to convince them from their own answer, that He was not only man and not only the carnal Son of David, but also that He as the only begotten Son of God was the Lord of David and all men from eternity. (*Ps.* ii. 7.) — Even to-day there are unhappily men, such as freemasons, freethinkers, and others, who like the Pharisees deny the divine nature of Christ, the Son of the living God, consider Him merely a very wise and virtuous man, and do not receive His doctrine, confirmed by so many miracles. Beware, my dear Christian, of these men who rob you the peace the soul and the consoling hope of a future resurrection and an eternal life, together with the faith in Christ, the divine Redeemer. But if you believe Christ to be the Son of God, and our Lord, Lawgiver, Instructor, and Redeemer, follow His teaching, and do not contradict in deed, what you profess with your lips.

PRAYER. O most amiable Jesus! who hast admonished us so affectionately to love God and our neighbor, pour the fire of Thy love into our hearts, that all our deeds and actions, all our thoughts and words may begin with Thy love and be ended with it. Grant, that we may love Thee with all the powers of our body and soul, and thereby be so united to Thee, that, like St. Paul, no temptation, no tribulation, no danger, not even death, may be able to separate us from Thee. Grant us also, that we may love our neighbors, friends,

and enemies as ourselves for Thy sake, and thus be made worthy to possess Thee as our Redeemer and merciful Judge.

WEDNESDAY FOLLOWING THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

[Emberday.]

LESSON. (ii. *Esdras* viii. 1—10.) In those days: All the people were gathered together as one man, to the street which is before the water gate, and they spoke to Esdras the scribe, to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel. Then Esdras the priest brought the law before the multitude of men and women, and all those that could understand, on the first day of the seventh month. And he read it plainly in the street that was before the water gate, from the morning until mid-day, before the men and the women, and all those that could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the book. And Esdras the scribe stood upon a step of wood, which he made to speak upon. And he opened the book before all the people, for he was above all the people; and when he had opened it, all the people stood. And Esdras blessed the Lord the great God: and all the people answered: Amen, amen; lifting up their hands. And they bowed down, with their faces to the ground. Now the Levites made silence among the people to hear the law; and the people stood in their place. And they read in the book of the law of God distinctly and plainly to be understood; and they understood when it was read. And Nehemias, and Esdras the priest and scribe, and the Levites who interpreted to all the people, said: This is a holy day to the Lord our God, do not mourn nor weep. For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. And he said to them: Go, eat fat meats, and drink sweet wine, and send portions to them that have not prepared for themselves; because it is the holy day of the Lord, and be not sad, for the joy of the Lord is our strength.

PRAYER. O Lord! send zealous priests, like Esdras, into Thy vineyard, the Church, and grant, that we, like this people, may ardently listen to the word of God, which Thy ministers, the priests, preach to us, that we may sincerely

bewail our sins and thus seek in Thee, our Lord, our only happiness and strength.

GOSPEL. (*Mark* ix. 16—28.) At that time: One of the multitude speaking to Jesus, said: Master, I have brought my son to thee, having a dumb spirit, who, wheresoever he taketh him, dasheth him, and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spoke to thy disciples to cast him out, and they could not. Who answering them, said: O incredulous generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me. And they brought him. And when he had seen him, immediately the spirit troubled him: and being thrown down upon the ground, he rolled about foaming. And he asked his father: How long time is it since this hath happened unto him? But he said: From his infancy: and oftentimes hath he cast him into the fire and into waters, to destroy him. But if thou canst do any thing, help us, having compassion on us. And Jesus saith to him: If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And immediately the Father of the boy crying out, with tears said: I do believe, Lord, help my unbelief. And when Jesus saw the multitude running together, he threatened the unclean spirit, saying to him: Deaf and dumb spirit, I command thee, go out of him; and enter not any more into him. And crying out, and greatly tearing him, he went out of him, and he became as dead, so that many said: He is dead. But Jesus taking him by the hand, lifted him up; and he arose. And when he was come into the house, his disciples secretly asked him: Why could not we cast him out? And he said to them: This kind can go out by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. May our weakness, O Lord, we beseech Thee, be supported by the relief of Thy mercy; that as we are continually decaying by our own nature, we may be strengthened by Thy goodness. Thro'.

FRIDAY FOLLOWING THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

[Emberday.]

LESSON. (*Osee* xiv. 2—10.) Thus saith the Lord: Return O Israel, to the Lord thy God: for thou hast fallen down by thy iniquity. Take with you words, and return to the Lord and say to him: Take away all iniquity, and receive the good; and we will render the calves of our lips. Assyria shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more: the works of our hands are our gods; for thou wilt have mercy on the fatherless that is in thee. I will heal their breaches, I will love them freely; for my wrath is turned away from them. I will be as the dew, Israel shall spring as the lily, and his root shall shoot forth as that of Libanus. His branches shall spread, and his glory shall be as the olive-tree; and his smell as that of Libanus. They shall be converted that sit under his shadow, they shall live upon wheat, and they shall blossom as a vine: his memorial shall be as the wine of Libanus. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I will hear him, and I will make him flourish like a green fir-tree: from me is thy fruit found. Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know these things?—For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressor shall fall in them.

EXPLANATION. The Prophet Osee calls the people of Israel, by God's command, to do penance, and endeavors to persuade them to it by describing the happiness, consequent upon it. O what blessing and what joy does sincere penance give during life and particularly in death!

[The gospel see on the feast of St. Mary Magdalen in the second part of this book.]

SATURDAY FOLLOWING THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

[Emberday.]

EPISTLE. (*Hebrews* ix. 2—12.) Brethren: There was a tabernacle made the first, wherein were the candlesticks, and the table, and the setting forth of loaves, which is called the Holy. And after the second veil, the tabernacle, which is

called the Holy of Holies: having the golden censer, and the ark of the testament covered about on every part with gold, in which was a golden pot that had manna, and the rod of Aaron that had blossomed, and the tables of the testament, and over it were the cherubims of glory overshadowing the propitiatory: of which it is not needful to speak now particularly. Now these things being thus ordered; into the first tabernacle the priests indeed always entered, accomplishing the offices of sacrifices. But into the second, the high-priest alone, once a year; not without blood, which he offereth for his own, and the people's ignorance: the Holy Ghost signifying this, that the way into the Holies was not yet made manifest, whilst the former tabernacle was yet standing. Which is a parable of the time then present: according to which gifts and sacrifices are offered, which cannot, as to the conscience, make him perfect that serveth, only in meats and in drinks, and divers washings, and justices of the flesh, laid on them until the time of correction. But Christ being come an highpriest of the good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation: neither by the blood of goats, or of calves, but by his own blood, entered once into the Holies, having obtained eternal redemption.

EXPLANATION. The apostle teaches in this epistle, that the bloody sacrifices of the priests of the Old Law are only figures of the bloody sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, and that they could produce no internal justification, and could not free from sin and death. This can be done by Christ only, who accomplished a redemption, which reaches over time and eternity, by His death on the cross and by His entrance into heaven, where He continually offers the merits of His death to His Father. Often and fervently thank God for the grace of this redemption, and make yourself a partaker in it by a life of piety.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xiii. 6—17.) At that time: Jesus spoke to the multitude this parable: A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it, and found none. And he said to the dresser of the vineyard: Behold, for these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and I find none. Cut it down therefore: why cumbereth it the ground? But he answering said to him: Lord, let it alone this year also until I dig about it, and dung it. And if

happily it bear fruit; but if not, then after thou shalt cut it down. And he was teaching in their synagogue on the Sabbath. And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years: and she was bowed together, neither could she look upwards at all. Whom when Jesus saw, he called her unto him, and said to her: Woman, thou art delivered from thy infirmity. And he laid his hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. And the ruler of the synagogue (being angry that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath) answering, said to the multitude: Six days there are wherein you ought to work. In them therefore come, and be healed; and not on the Sabbath-day. And the Lord answering him said: Ye hypocrites, doth not every one of you on the Sabbath day loose his ox or his ass from the manger, and lead them to water? And ought not this daughter of Abraham, whom Satan had bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath-day? And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the things that were gloriously done by him.

PRAYER. O Lord, do not permit that we, when Thou comest and askest fruits of true penance, be found without them and be rejected by Thee; grant us rather time for penance and the grace, that we, faithfully following Thy footprints, may abound in all good works and thus be made partakers of eternal happiness. Send also holy priests into Thy Church, who have only Thy honor and the salvation of souls at heart, and by word and example lead the faithful to heaven. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

THE Church prays at the Introit of the Mass for the peace which God has promised by His prophets: Give peace, O Lord, to those who patiently wait for thee, that thy prophets may be found faithful: hear the prayers of thy servant, and of thy people Israel. I rejoiced at

the things that were said to me: we shall go into the house of the Lord. (*Ps.* cxxi.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. May the influence of Thy mercy, O Lord, direct our souls: for without Thy help we can do nothing well pleasing to Thee. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (i. *Cor.* i. 4—8.) BRETHREN: I give thanks to my God always for you, for the grace of God, that is given you in Christ Jesus; that in all things you are made rich in him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge, as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you. So that nothing is wanting to you in any grace, waiting for the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who also will confirm you unto the end without crime, in the day of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul shows in this epistle, that true love for his neighbor reigns in him, because he rejoices and thanks God, that he enriched the Corinthians with different graces and gifts, particularly with frequent preaching of the word of God and the necessary knowledge of the doctrines of faith and morals, thus confirming the testimony of Christ in them, so that they could without fear expect the arrival of Christ for judgment. Do thou also rejoice, with St. Paul, at the graces given to thy neighbor, for this is a mark of particular love for our neighbor.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* ix. 1—8.) AT THAT TIME: Jesus entering into a boat, he passed over the water and came into his own city. And behold, they brought to him one sick of the palsy, lying on a bed. And Jesus seeing their faith, said to the man sick of the palsy: Be of good heart, son, thy sins are forgiven thee. And behold, some of the Scribes said within themselves: He blasphemeth. And Jesus seeing their thoughts, said: Why do you think evil in your hearts? Whether it is easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee: or to say, Arise and walk. But that you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then said he to the man sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thy house. And he arose and went into his house. And the multitudes seeing it, feared, and glorified God that gave such power to men.

EXPLANATIONS. I. Those who brought this sick man to Christ, give us a touching example of how we should take care

for the sick and help them according to our ability. And since Christ was so well pleased with their faith and their charity, as to remit the sins and cure the man sick of palsy, let us learn, how many who are deceased in their soul, we might assist, if we were to lead them to God by confident prayer, by urgent admonitions, or by good example. Let us, therefore, not omit, at least to pray diligently for sinners, if we are unable to do anything else for them.

II. Christ did not cure the one sick of palsy, until He had forgiven him his sins, by which He wished to teach us, that sins are often the causes of diseases and other evils, by which we are visited, and which would not come upon us or would leave us, if we would abstain from our sins and perform true penance. This doctrine Jesus confirmed, when He said to the man, who had been sick for thirty eight years: Sin no more, lest some worse

thing happen to thee. (*John* v. 14.) Would that this were considered by those who so often impetuously demand of God liberation from their evils, but do not intend to free themselves from their sins, which are the cause of these evils, by a sincere repentance.

III. "He blasphemeth." Thus thought the Jews, in their perverted hearts, of Christ, because they believed, that He in remitting the sins of the sick man, usurped the rights of God and thus did a great injury to God; for to inflict an injury on God, to think, say, or do anything disgraceful against God and His saints, this is to blaspheme God. But these Jews did not consider, that they by their rash judgment blasphemed, since they blasphemed Christ who sufficiently proved Himself God by the cure of the man sick of palsy and by many other works, beyond the power of man. By the accusation that He blasphemed God, they offered Him so great an insult, that He was obliged to reprove their fault. If Christ so severely reprimanded the Jews, who would not recognise Him as God, for a blasphemous thought against Him, what will He do with those Christians who, though they wish to be adorers of God and His Son, nevertheless utter blasphemies, curses, and profanations of the holy Sacraments?

IV. When Jesus saw their thoughts, He said: Why think you evil in your hearts? This may be taken to heart by those who think, that thoughts are free, to whom it never occurs to confess anything with regard to their evil and shameful thoughts, though God, the most Holy and most Just, will, nevertheless, not leave a voluntary unchaste, proud, angry, revengeful, envious thought unpunished, any more than an idle word. (*Matt.* xii. 36.) The best remedy against evil thoughts would be the recollection, that God who searches the heart, sees them and will punish them.

PRAYER. How great, O Jesus! is Thy love and mercy towards poor sinners, since Thou not only forgavest the sins of the man sick of palsy, in the day's gospel, but didst also call him a son, console and entirely cure him. This Thy love encourages me to beg of Thee the grace, that we may rise from our bed of sins by true penance, amend our life, and enter the house of eternal happiness on the way of Thy commandments.

INSTRUCTION ON INDULGENCES.

Be of good heart, my son, thy sins are forgiven.
(*Matt.* ix. 2.)

THE same that Christ says to the man sick of the palsy, the priest says to every contrite sinner in the confessional, and thus remits the crime or the guilt of his sins and the eternal

punishment, by virtue of the authority given him by God. But since the sins, besides the guilt and eternal punishment, draw after them also temporal punishment *[see Instruction on Satisfaction on the fourth Sunday in Advent]*, and indeed spiritual or supernatural ones, as: different painful conditions of the soul, as well in this world as in the next in purgatory, and natural ones, as: poverty, disease, all sorts of adversities and accidents, we should endeavor to liberate ourselves from them by means of indulgences.

What is an indulgence?

It is a total or partial remission of temporal punishment, which man would have to suffer either in this or the next life, after the sins have been remitted.

How do we know, that after the remission of the sin, there still remains temporal punishment?

From holy Scripture; for our first parents after the forgiveness of their sin, were still afflicted with a temporal punishment. (*Gen.* iii.) God likewise forgave the sins of the children of Israel, who murmured so often against Him in the desert, but not their punishment, for He excluded them from the Promised Land, and caused them to die in the desert. (*Numb.* xiv.) Moses and Aaron experienced the same, on account of a little want of confidence in God. (*Num.* xx. 12., *Deut.* xxxii. 51.) David, indeed, received pardon from God through the Prophet Nathan for his adultery and murder (ii. *Kings* xii.), still he had to endure heavy temporal punishment, as for instance the death of his only beloved son Absolon. Finally, faith teaches us, that we are tortured in purgatory for our sins, until we have paid the last farthing. (*Matt.* v. 26.)

Did the Church always agree with this doctrine of Scripture?

Yes; for resting on these texts of Scripture she always taught, that by the Sacrament of Penance the guilt and eternal punishment, due to sin, are indeed forgiven for the sake of the infinite merits of Jesus, but that temporal punishments still remain, for which the sinner must do penance. Even in the earliest times she imposed great penalties and penances upon sinners for their sins which were already forgiven. For murder, for instance, for adultery a penance of twenty years, for perjury eleven, for impurity, for denial of faith, for fortune-telling seven years of severe penance with fasting, &c., were imposed; during this time it was not allowed to travel, except on foot, to be present at the holy Sacrifice of Mass, to receive the holy Eucharist, &c. But if the penitents showed a great zeal for penance and sincere amendment, or if distinguished members of the Church, particularly martyrs, interceded for them, the bishops granted them an indulgence, that is, they remitted the remaining punishment either totally or partially. But in our days, on account of the weakness of the faithful, the Church must give lenity the upper

hand. Besides the ecclesiastical punishments, the spiritual punishments which would have to be suffered either here or in purgatory for the taking away of sins, are shortened and mitigated by the indulgences through the treasure of the communion of saints.

Has the Church the power to remit temporal punishments, or to grant indulgences?

The Council of Trent expressly states, that the Church has power to grant indulgences (*Sess.* 25.), and this statement it supports by the words of Christ. For as Christ protests: Verily I say unto you: whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; so He also promised, that whatever the Church looses upon earth, is ratified and loosed in heaven. Whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed in heaven. (*Matt.* xviii. 18.) Even an apostle granted an indulgence. St. Paul forgave the incestuous Corinthian, upon whom he had imposed a heavy punishment, what he would still have had to suffer, in the person and power of Christ, that his spirit might be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. (ii. *Cor.* ii. 10.; i. *Cor.* v. 4, 5.)

What is meant by saying, indulgences are granted out of the treasury of the saints or of the Church?

By this is meant, that God remits the sinner's temporal punishment by the Church for the sake of the merits of Christ and the saints, and supplies, as it were, by these merits what is still wanting in our satisfaction.

What kinds of indulgences are there?

Two; plenary indulgences and partial indulgences. A plenary indulgence, if rightly received, remits all ecclesiastical and temporal punishment, which we would otherwise have to expiate by the usual ecclesiastical penance. A partial indulgence of so many days or years, remits so much of the temporal punishment as the sinner could have expiated in so many days or years of severe penance, according to the penitential code of the earliest ages of the Church, hence also the name forty day's indulgence, &c.

What is a jubilee?)*

It is a plenary indulgence, which the pope grants to all the faithful over the whole world, out of the treasure of the infinite merits of Christ and His saints, and by which all temporal punish-

*) The word jubilee signifies deliverance, remittance. With the Jews every fiftieth year was called so, and all the prisoners and slaves were to be set free in this year according to the command of God, the inheritances which had been sold, restored to their masters, the debts canceled, and the earth left untilled. This was a year of grace and rest for the Jews. This jubilee of the Jews was a figure of the Catholic jubilee, in which the captives of sin and Satan are liberated, the debt of sin remitted, and the inheritance of heaven, which the sinner had sold to Satan, is restored to him.

ments for all, even the most heinous sins, otherwise reserved to the pope and the bishops, together with the accompanying ecclesiastical punishment, are remitted and forgiven in the name of God, if the sinner confesses contritely and receives the holy Eucharist and has a firm purpose of doing penance.

What is required to receive an indulgence?

That we be free from all mortal sin, hence in the state of grace, which can be obtained by the worthy reception of the holy Sacraments; moreover that we put aside all inclination for sin and feel a perfect detestation not only for sin, but also for all evil occasions of it, and for all that leads to sin; also that we ardently perform the prescribed good works, especially the prayer for the exaltation and spreading of the holy Catholic Church, for peace and unity of Christian princes, for rooting up of heresies, &c. (which generally consists in seven Our Fathers and Hail Marys, Glory be to the Father, &c., with the Apostles' Creed.)

Do indulgences free us from all works of penance?

By no means; for besides that among a thousand there is hardly one in the proper state of soul to receive an indulgence worthily, since besides purity of soul the inclination to sin must be rooted out, it is by no means the intention of the Church, to free us from all works of penance by granting us indulgences. For she cannot act contrary to the words of our Saviour: Unless you do penance, you shall all likewise perish. (*Luke* xiii. 3.) She rather wishes to assist our weakness, to supply our inability to do the required penance, and to contribute what is wanting in our penance, by applying the satisfaction of Christ and the saints to us by indulgences. If we, therefore, do not wish to do penance for our own sins, whe shall have no part in the penances of others by indulgences.

Are indulgences useful for the dead?

Yes, by way of suffrage, so far as we comply with the required conditions, and thus beg of God, for the merits of His Son and the saints, to remit the punishments of the souls in purgatory. Whether God will receive this petition or not, remains with Him, and He will act only according to the condition of the deceased person. We must, therefore, not depend upon the indulgences and good works, which may be performed for us after death, but we should rather endeavor, during our life-time, to secure our salvation by leading a pious life and by our own good works and by the gaining of indulgences.

What follows from the doctrine of the Church concerning indulgences?

That an indulgence is not a charter or license to commit any sin, as the enemies of the Church falsely contend; that by an indulgence no forgiveness of a committed or a future sin is granted;

that no Catholic can believe, that he is free from doing works of penance or other good works by gaining indulgences, that he is free to waver and change his mind, free from the fight with his evil inclinations, passions, and habits, from compensating for injuries, repairing scandals, from retrieving neglected good, and the glorifying of God by works and sufferings; but that indulgences give nothing else than partial or total remission of temporal punishment; that they remind us of our weakness and lukewarmness in comparison with the early Christians; that they impel us to propitiate the justice of God according to our ability; and, finally, they remind us to thank God continually, that He gave the Church a means in the inexhaustible treasure of the merits of Christ and His saints, to help our weakness and to supply what is wanting in our penance.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

N the Introit of the Mass, God says: I am the Saviour of my people, saith the Lord: in whatever distress they call on me, I will hear them: and will be their Lord for ever. Attend, O my people, to my law, incline your ears to the words of my mouth. (*Ps.* lxxvii.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O Almighty and merciful God, favourably defend us from all adversity: that being free both in soul and body, we may with security of mind perform Thy service. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Ephes.* iv. 23—28.) Brethren: Be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and put on the new man, who, according to God, is created in justice and holiness of truth. Wherefore putting away lying, speak ye the truth every man with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. Be angry and sin not. Let not the sun go down upon your anger. Give not place to the devil. He that stole, let him now steal no more: but rather let him labour working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have something to give to him that suffereth need.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul admonishes the Ephesians and us, that we should lay aside the old man, like a worn out garment, and put on the new man, that is, renew our internal and external

conduct. This renewal according to his teaching takes place, when we by a true repentance put away our usual vices, shun all lying, anger, injustice, &c., and, on the contrary, adorn our soul with holy virtues and zealously seek after Christian justice and perfection.—We have, perhaps, already sought to change our manner of living, for which a jubilee or another particular solemnity of the Church gave us occasion, and at that time, perhaps, purified our soul by a general confession, and made the firm purpose, to live for God and our salvation, we appeared converted and to be other men: but how long did this conversion last? Ah, how soon did we fall back into the old, sinful way of living! And why? Certainly because we lived in too great, deceitful security. We thought everything accomplished by the general confession; we were satisfied and omitted to employ the means of keeping in the state of renewal. We did not thank God for the grace of conversion, we did not ask Him for the grace of perseverance. We frequented evil company as before, and did not avoid dangerous occasions, we indulged in idleness and pleasures as before. How can it appear strange, if such a conversion is useless? Ah, we should remain in wholesome fear even after the remission of our sins. (*Eccl.* v. 5.) For even if we could say, that we have done everything, nevertheless we cannot be certain, whether we be worthy of hatred or love. (*Eccl.* ix. 1.) We should, therefore, work out our salvation according to the advice of St. Paul (*Philipp.* ii. 12.) in fear and trembling, and thus not fall into the old life of sin by rash security, losing the hope of a new conversion.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxii. 1—14.) At that time: Jesus spoke to the Scribes and Pharisees in a parable, saying: The kingdom of heaven is likened to a king, who made a marriage for his son. And he sent his servants, to call them that were invited to the marriage: and they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying: Tell them that were invited: Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my beeves and fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come ye to the marriage. But they neglected, and went their ways, one to his farm, and another to his merchandise. And the rest laid hands on his servants, and having treated them contumeliously put them to death. But when the king had heard of it, he was angry, and sending his armies, he destroyed those murderers, and burnt their city. Then he saith to his servants: The marriage indeed is ready; but they that were invited, were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the high-ways; and as

many as you shall find, call to the marriage. And his servants going forth into the ways, gathered together all they found, both bad and good: and the marriage was filled with guests. And the king went in to see the guests; and he saw there a man who had not on a wedding-garment. And he saith to him: Friend, how camest thou in hither not having on a wedding-garment? But he was silent. Then the king said to the waiters: Bind his hands and his feet, and cast him into the exterior darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen.

REMARK. This parable agrees in many respects with that on the second Sunday after Pentecost, and has the same meaning. See,

therefore, the explanation of that gospel, as also of the gospel on the feast of St. Catherine, to which may be added the following

EXPLANATION. The king in the present parable is the Heavenly Father who betroths His only begotten Son to the Church as to a spouse, and on this occasion makes the finest marriage-feast by giving the evangelical doctrine, the holy Sacraments, and the heavenly joys. To this marriage-feast, He first invited the Jews through His servants, the prophets, apostles, and disciples of Christ. But the Jews despised the honor and grace of the divine King, destined for them, abused and killed His servants, and were, therefore, cast aside and together with their city Jerusalem destroyed by the armies of their enemies, as a just punishment; but in their stead the heathens and all those nations were called, who were on the broad road to hell, and who now occupy the places of the unfortunate Jews at the marriage-feast of the Church, and shall also occupy them in heaven. In this manner is verified in the Jews, to whom Christ addressed this parable, that many of them, nay, all are called, but few chosen, because they would not heed the invitation.

APPLICATION. We have the fortune not only to be invited to this marriage-feast, but are in reality guests at it, because we are members of the Church of Christ by faith. "But the Christian," says St. Gregory, "who is a member of the Church by faith, but has not charity, is like to a man who comes to the marriage-feast without the wedding-garment." With this garment which is charity, Christ was vested, when He came to celebrate the nuptials with His spouse, the Church, and by the bond of charity the Son of God also unites Himself with His elect. He clearly lets us know, that charity is the wedding-garment which should vest us. Those, therefore, who believe and are in the communion of the Church, but who do not preserve the grace of charity, are, indeed, in the wedding-chamber, but they are not adorned with the wedding-garment. They are, therefore, dead members of the Church, and shall not be admitted without this garment into the celestial marriage-feast in the triumphant Church, but rather be cast with that unfortunate guest into exterior darkness. This one was silent, when he was asked by the king, why he had not the wedding-garment. By this we see, that no one can excuse himself to God for not having charity, because every one can have it, if he asks it from God, and, as St. Augustine says, our heart is the workshop of charity, and every one who has a heart, can practise it.

PRAYER. I thank Thee, O Jesus, that Thou didst call me to the marriage-feast in Thy Church, give me the wedding-garment of charity, that I may be present at the celestial marriage-feast, and not be cast into exterior darkness.

INSTRUCTION CONCERNING HELL.

Cast him into the exterior darkness. (*Matt.* xxii. 13.)

What is hell?

HELL is that awful place of the lower regions, where the damned must suffer eternal punishment.

Is there a hell?

Yes, as shown by reason, holy Scripture, and the teaching of the Church. Reason tells us, that there is a God, that God is just, and if God is just, He cannot leave sin unpunished. It is evident, that all sins are not punished in this world; there is, therefore, after this world a place, where every sin, not washed out by sorrow and penance, will be punished, and this place is—hell. All nations from the beginning of the world, even those who had not the light of revelation, believed this.

But clearer still is the existence of hell shown by holy Scripture. Already the pious Job (x. 12.) speaks of a region of misery and darkness, where are the shadows of death and no order, but where eternal terror reigns. The Prophet Isaias (xxx. 33.) says, that hell is deep and wide, and that the fire burning in it, is like a stream of sulphur, ignited by the breath of the Lord. Our Saviour expressly says, that those who have done evil, shall go to everlasting torment (*Matt.* xxv. 46), that they shall be tortured with everlasting fire. (*Matt.* xxv. 41.) He makes mention of hell, and says that an inextinguishable fire burns there, and a worm which never dies, plagues the wicked. (*Matt.* ix. 42.; x. 28.) All the fathers of the Church teach and testify to the same doctrine. St. Augustine, among many others, says: "The infinite wisdom of God tells us, that there is a hell, and the illimitable power of God it is, that punishes the damned in a wonderful, but real manner."

Wherein do the pains of hell consist?

Sacred Scripture and the Church teach concerning the pains of the reprobate in hell, that they there burn in an eternally inextinguishable fire. (*Matt.* xxv. 30.) The holy doctors of the Church say, that this fire is never extinguished, and its smoke ascends and rises from century to century. "I see this fire," says St. Gregory, "as if it were gifted with reason; it makes a distinction between the guilty, and tortures the damned according to the nature of their sins." This fire burns, but never consumes its victims; it communicates, as Cassiodorus says, immortality to the reprobate and lets them suffer pain, which preserves them, like salt which penetrates the flesh and keeps it from corruption, as Jesus says: Every one shall be salted with fire. (*Mark.* ix. 48.) This fire does not shine, it leaves the reprobate in darkness (*Matt.* viii. 12.), and with this fire a worm is combined, as Christ says, which continually torments the damned, and never

dies. This worm is not only the bad conscience, say the holy fathers, but particularly the privation of the Beatific Vision. Eternally will the thought torment the damned: I have lost God, the only, true and highest good, I have lost Him through my fault, I have lost Him for a brief pleasure, I have lost Him for ever. This is the gnawing worm which unremittingly torments and gnaws the reprobate, this is the most terrible torment, the most insupportable torture. And this torment and torture remain for ever, will never cease. In hell there is no more time, eternity has devoured all time; and if after millions and millions of years a damned one wailingly asks his companion in misery: What time is it? he receives the answer: It is eternity.

Who would not fear hell, when he reflects upon this, and not avoid sin which cast man down into it! And yet there are so many, upon whom the truth of the existence of a hell makes no impression, yes, who even deny that there is a hell, and say: "God is love, He can have no pleasure in the torments of His creatures, He cannot eternally punish a sin which was committed in so short a time as is the life of man." But those who speak thus, forget that God is just, that His love and mercy are indeed always ready to forgive the contrite and penitent, but that His justice must also be satisfied, when the sinner continually rejects the merciful love of God; they forget, that every grievous sin which man commits voluntarily and knowingly, is an infinite, eternal insult, offered to God, which can only be atoned for by an eternal punishment. For the perverted and malicious will of a man, who dies in mortal sin, remains perverted and malicious in eternity, therefore he must also be punished eternally.

O my dear Christian, do not listen to such talkers; for just on account of their sinful life, they ought to fear hell which condemns their lives, and therefore they endeavor to free themselves from this fear by denying the existence of hell; but cannot succeed; for Jesus, the mouth of truth, has told us, that there is a hell, and His word remains true for all eternity. Endeavor rather by a pious and godly life to escape hell descend in spirit; according to the advice of a saint, very often into hell, contemplate the torments of the damned, and let this contemplation urge you to imitate Christ, who has promised the joys of heaven to all His faithful followers.

CONSOLING DOCTRINE ON THE JOYS OF HEAVEN.

The kingdom of heaven is like to a man, being a king, who made a marriage for his son. (*Matt.* xxii. 2.)

HEaven is also likened by Christ to a marriage-feast, because we can there enjoy all imaginable pleasures in the most perfect union with God. Wherein these pleasures consist, St. Paul could not describe, although he was rapt into the third

heaven and tasted these pleasures; he only said: No eye hath seen, no ear heard, and it hath not entered into the heart of man, what God has prepared for those that love him. (*Cor.* ii. 9.) Holy Writ, indeed, gives us many descriptions of the celestial joys, it sometimes calls heaven a paradise of bliss, sometimes a precious pearl, sometimes a treasure which neither rust nor moth consumes, nor thieves dig up and steal; sometimes it shows heaven in the picture of a kingdom, a throne, a crown, whereby we are raised to the highest honor; sometimes in the picture of a city which is built up of gold, precious stones and pearls, lighted up by the splendor of God, filled with magnificence and glory, and with all this enjoying undisturbed peace and the greatest security; but these are only images or similitudes, which are taken from the most beautiful, most precious, and most magnificent and most pleasant things of the earth, to teach us that heaven is as beautiful and pleasant a place, as we can wish and represent to ourselves, and that all possible beauty, agreeableness and joy may be found in heaven in the highest and most perfect manner, without any evil, without loathsomeness, disgust and fear of loss. In heaven we shall possess God Himself, the fountain of all joy and bliss, and enjoy His own happiness with Him for all eternity. More is not needed to give us the highest conception of heaven; for it follows from this: that we, like God Himself, far away from all evil and sorrow, shall partake of His joys and perfections. We shall be like to Him. (i. *John* iii. 2.) Who would not willingly despise the vain, short and imperfect pleasures of this earth, whilst contemplating this indescribable bliss? Who would not willingly bear all the misfortunes and misery of this world, when considering that we shall be the happier in the next world, the unhappier we have been in this life? What would it avail us to have enjoyed all the pleasures of this world, if deprived of the pleasures of heaven hereafter!

ASPIRATION. How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! my soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord. My heart and my flesh have rejoiced in the living God. (*Ps.* lxxxiii. 2, 3.) How do I loathe the world, when I contemplate heaven. (*St. Ign. Loyola.*)

INSTRUCTION FOR THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

THE Introit of the Mass is an humble prayer, by which we acknowledge, that we are punished for our disobedience: Whatever thou hast done to us, O Lord, thou hast done

by a just judgment: for we have sinned and disobeyed thy commandments: but glorify thy name, and deal with us according to thy great mercy. (*Dan.* iii. 28.) Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Favourably grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy servants both pardon and peace; that, being cleansed from the guilt of all their offences, they may serve Thee with secure minds. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Eph.* v. 15—21.) Brethren: See therefore how you walk circumspectly not as unwise, but as wise: redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore become not unwise, but understanding what is the will of God. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is luxury, but be ye filled with the holy Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns, and spiritual canticles, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord: giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to God and the Father. Being subject one to another in the fear of Christ.

How may we redeem time?

By employing, as St. Augustine says, every moment, even with the loss of all temporal advantages, to gain the eternal goods, by letting no opportunity pass to do good, to labor and suffer through love for God, to improve our lives and increase in virtue.

"Do you wish to know," says the pious Cornelius a Lapide, "how precious time is: Ask the damned, for these know it from experience. Come, rich man, from the abyss of hell, tell us what you would give for one year, one day, one hour of this time! I would, he says, give the whole world, all pleasures, all treasures, and bear all torments. O, if only one moment were granted me to have contrition for my sins, for the forgiveness of my crimes, I would purchase this moment with every labor, with any penance, with all punishments, torments, and tortures, which men ever suffered in purgatory or in hell, even if they lasted hundred, yes a thousand million of years! O precious moment upon which whole eternity depends! O, how many moments did you, my dear Christian, neglect, in which you could have served God, could have done good for love of Him, and gained eternal happiness for them, and you lost these precious moments. Remember: with one moment of time, if you employ it well, you can purchase eternal happiness, but with whole eternity not one moment of precious time!

ASPIRATION. Most bountiful God and Lord! I am heartily sorry, that I have so badly employed the time, which Thou hast given me for my salvation. In order to supply what I have neglected, as far as I am able, I offer up to Thee all that I have done or suffered from the first use of my reason, as if I had really to do and suffer it still; and, indeed, I offer it up in union with all the works and sufferings of our Saviour, and beg fervently, that Thou wilt supply, through His infinite merits, my defects, and wilt be pleased with all my actions and sufferings.

Be not drunk with wine, wherein is luxury!

[About the vice of drunkenness see the third Sunday after Pentecost. Here whe shall only speak of those who make others drunk by intemperately drinking toasts, or by urgent encouragement.] The Persian King Assuerus expressly forbade, that any one should be urged to drink at his great banquet. (*Esth.* i. 8.) This heathen who knew from the light of reason, that it is immoral to lead others to intemperance, will one day rise in judgment against those Christians who, enlightened by the light of faith, would not recognise and avoid this vice. Therefore the Prophet Isaias (v. 22.) pronounces, woe over those who are heroes in drinking and know how to intoxicate others; and St. Augustine admonishes us, by no means to consider those as friends, who wish to make us enemies of God by pledging us.

GOSPEL. (*John* iv. 46—53.) At that time: There was a certain ruler whose son was sick at Capharnaum. He having heard that Jesus was come from Judea into Galilee, went to him, and prayed him to come down and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. Jesus therefore said to him: Unless you see signs and wonders, you believe not. The ruler saith to him: Lord, come down before that my son die. Jesus saith to him: Go thy way, thy son liveth. The man believed the word which Jesus said to him, and went his way. And as he was going down, his servants met him; and they brought word, saying, that his son lived. He asked therefore of them the hour wherein he grew better. And they said to him: Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. The father therefore knew that it was at the same hour that Jesus said to him: Thy son liveth; and himself believed, and his whole house.

INSTRUCTIONS. I. God permitted the son of the ruler to become sick, perhaps, only for this reason, that he might ask Christ for the health of his son, and thus obtain the true faith and eternal happiness. In this manner God generally seeks to lead sinners to Himself, in as much as He brings all sorts of evils and misfortunes either upon the sinner himself, or his children, property, cattle, &c. Therefore said David: It is good for me, that Thou hast humbled me, that I may learn Thy justifications (*Ps.* cxviii. 71.), and therefore he also asked God to fill their faces (of sinners) with shame, that they should seek His name. (*Ps.* lxxxii. 17.) This happened in the case of those of whom David says: Their infirmities were multiplied: afterwards they hastened to God. (*Ps.* xv. 4.) O, would we only do the same! When God sends us failure of crops, inundations, hailstorms, dearth, war, &c., He wishes nothing else

than that we turn away from our sins and come to Him. But what do we do? Instead of hastening to God, we take refuge in superstition, or we murmur against God, yes, find fault with or even blaspheme His sacred regulations; instead of removing our sins by sincere penance, we continually commit new sins, by murmuring and impatience, by rash judgments, as if injustice and malice of others were the cause of our misfortune, by hatred and enmity, &c. What, therefore, must God still do if He cannot better us, either by benefits or by punishments?

II. Christ said to this ruler: If you do not see signs and wonders, you believe not. This was a reprimand for his imperfect faith; for if he had truly believed, he should not have asked Him to come to the house, but should have, like the centurion, believed (*Matt.* viii.) that Christ, even being absent, could help his son. Many Christians deserve the same rebuke from Christ, because they lose nearly all faith and confidence in God, when He does not immediately help them in their troubles, as they wish. But how displeasing such a want of confidence is to God, He gives us to understand, when He pronounces a terrible woe (*Eccl.* ii. 1—5.) and denies all assistance to those who are so fickle and lose hope and patience.

III. How much may not the example of the father of a family accomplish! This ruler had hardly received the faith, than his whole household was converted and believed in Christ. O, how much good could fathers and mothers accomplish among their subjects and domestics by their good example, by their piety and zeal in prayer, by frequent reception of the holy Sacraments, by their meekness, temperance, modesty, and other virtues!

CONSOLATION IN SICKNESS.

The son of a certain ruler was sick. (*John* iv. 16.)

TO console yourself in sickness, you ought to consider that God sends you this sickness for the welfare of your soul, so that you may know your sins; or if you be innocent, practise yourself in patience, humility, charity, &c., and increase your merits. Therefore a holy father said to one of his companions, who complained, because he was sick: "My son! if you are gold, then you will be proved by sickness, but if you are mixed with dross, then you will be purified." "Many who are well, are vicious," writes St. Augustine, "who if they were sick, would be virtuous;" and St. Bernard says: "It is better to arrive at salvation through sickness, than to be well and be damned."

It is also a powerful means of consolation in sickness, to represent the suffering Redeemer to ourselves, who had no soundness from the top of His head to the sole of His foot, and contemplating whom St. Bonaventure used to cry out: "O Lord, I do not wish to live without sickness, since I see Thee wounded so much."

If we fall into sickness, we should carefully examine, whether we possess any illgotten goods, or have any other secret sin on our conscience; and if we are conscious of any, we should quickly free ourselves from it by a contrite, sincere confession, and by restoring the things belonging to others. Sins are very often the cause of disease, and no doctor can, perhaps, cure them, as long as we are stained by sins, because God does not give His blessing, if He is not first propitiated by penance. Still less can we expect help, but rather temporal and eternal misfortune, if we have recourse to superstition and spells, as King Ochozias experienced, who was punished with death, because he had had recourse to an idol, Beelzebub, in sickness. (iv. *Kings* i.)

PRAYER. O Jesus, Thou true physician of our souls! Thou who dost wound us and heal us, yea, even permittest us often to grow sick in body, that our souls may get well; grant, that I may employ every bodily pain, according to Thy merciful purposes, to the furtherance of my salvation.

INSTRUCTION ON CARE OF THE SICK.

Come down before that my son die. (*John* iv. 49.)

All those who have the charge of sick persons, should be like to this father, that is, they should before all endeavor to call in Jesus in the most holy Sacrament, before the sick person becomes unable to receive Him. The devil seeks to hinder nothing more than this. He excites the imagination in the sick person, making him believe that he can live longer, that he will certainly get well again, in order the easier to ruin him afterwards, because he puts off his conversion. To this end those contribute faithfully who through fear of frightening the sick person or of annoying him, fail to call the priest at the right time. But this is a cruel love, which deprives the sick person of the salvation of his soul and eternal happiness, and draws with it a terrible responsibility. Where there is question of eternity, no carefulness can be too great. We should, therefore, chose the safest side, because the sickness may easily grow greater and finally make the sick person unable to attend to the affair of saving his soul. We should, therefore, not conceal from him the danger in which he is, and if the sick person has still the use of his reason, should call in the priest whom he himself asks for, that he may receive the Last Sacraments. He will not die any sooner on that account, but rather derive the greatest benefit from it, since his conscience will be cleansed from sin, which may be the cause of his sickness, and, perhaps, he may be freed from his illness, or, at least, he will be strengthened by the newly received grace of God, to bear his pains with greater patience and to die far easier, securer, and more consoled. We should also endeavor to encourage the

sick person to resign himself to the will of God and to a filial confidence in God's help, say consoling prayers for him, preserve and strengthen him against melancholy thoughts and the temptations of the devil; we should present him the crucifix to kiss, pronounce or read slowly and not too loud from some prayerbook the sacred names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and other consoling aspirations, sign him with the sign of the cross, sprinkle him with holy water, and above all pray for a happy death for him; but not weep and wail, by which death is only made harder for him, nor should we hold useless, idle and worldly conversations with him, because he is prevented by them from thinking of God and the salvation of his soul, and from preparing himself for the last dangerous struggle. Finally, we should by no means suffer in his presence persons who have given him occasions of committing sin, because they would be obstacles to his sincere conversion.

There is truly no greater work of charity than to help our neighbor to a happy death.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE TWENTY FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

AT the Introit of the Mass is said a prayer of Mardochai, fosterfather of queen Esther, which may be used in all necessities: All things, O Lord, are in thy power: and no one can resist thy will; for thou madest all things: heaven and earth, and whatever is contained within the compass of the heavens: thou art Lord of all. (*Esther* xiii. 9, 10.) Blessed are the undefiled in the way; who walk in the law of the Lord. (*Ps.* cxviii.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Preserve Thy family, O Lord, we beseech Thee, by Thy constant mercy: that under Thy protection, it may be freed from all adversity, and by the practice of good works, continue devoted to Thy name. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Eph.* vi. 10—18.) BRETHREN: Be strengthened in the Lord, and in the might of his power. Put you on the armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood; but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirit of

wickedness in the high places. Therefore take unto you the armour of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and to stand in all things perfect. Stand therefore having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of justice, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace: in all things taking the shield of faith, wherewith you may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one. And take unto you the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.

EXPLANATION. The apostle teaches the Ephesians and us, how hard and dangerous a struggle every Christian has to make, not against human enemies of flesh and blood, but against spiritual, invisible enemies, who were one time powerful princes in heaven, but through sin became princes of the darkness of this world, govern the adherents of the world and sinful pleasures, and exercise their evil influence in the air as well as on the earth, as far as God permits them for our chastisement or trial.

He shows us also the manner in which we can gain victory in this struggle, and how we can overcome in the evil day, that is, in time of temptation, and particularly in the hour of death, when he admonishes us to have confidence in God and gives us the weapons for the fight. We should, therefore, gird ourselves with the girdle of truth, which shows us, that glory, concupiscence, and riches are vain and useless, and we should put on the breast-plate of justice which is made of good works; we should put on the shoes of the preparation of the gospel, which alone obtains us true peace to live faithfully; and take the shield of faith, which teaches us how richly God rewards virtue and how terribly He punishes those who succumb to temptation and sin; and cover ourselves with the helmet of salvation, namely, with confidence in God and the hope of heaven; and take the sword of the word of God, making use, when violently tempted, of consoling and strengthening expressions of Holy Scripture, by which we can put the devil to flight, according to the example of Christ (*Matt.* iv.) and the saints.—Let us diligently use these weapons, and we shall never be overcome in this dangerous, spiritual combat, but be victorious and be crowned with the crown of victory.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xviii. 23—35.) At that time: Jesus spoke to his disciples this parable: The kingdom of heaven is likened to a king who would take an account of his servants. And when he had begun to take the account, one was brought to him that owed him ten thousand talents. And as he had not wherewith to pay it, his lord commanded that

he should be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. But that servant falling down, besought him, saying: Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And the lord of that servant being moved with pity, let him go and forgave him the debt. But when that servant was gone out, he found one of his fellow-servants that owed him a hundred pence; and laying hold of him, he throttled him saying: Pay what thou owest. And his fellow-servant falling down, besought him, saying: Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he paid the debt. Now

his fellow-servants seeing what was done, were very much grieved, and they came and told their lord all that was done. Then his lord called him, and said to him: Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all the debt, because thou besoughtest me: shouldst not thou then have had compassion also on thy fellow-servant, even as I had compassion on thee? And his lord being angry delivered him to the torturers, until he paid all the debt. So also shall my heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother from your hearts.

Who are understood by the king and the servants?

By the king God, and by the servants all mankind.

What is meant by the ten thousand talents?

The ten thousand talents, according to our money eight million three hundred and fifty five thousand dollars, signify every mortal sin, the guilt of which is so great and heavy, that no creature can pay it, that is, satisfy for it; even all the works of the saints cannot smooth it over, because by every mortal sin the infinitely great, good and holy God is offended, which offence it is as impossible for any creature to cancel, as it is for a poor servant to pay a debt of eight million three hundred and fifty five thousand dollars. Nevertheless God is so merciful and propitious, that He remits the whole immeasurable debt of the sinner, on account of the infinite merits of Christ, if the sinner contritely begs for forgiveness and wishes to make atonement.

Why did the master order, not only the debtor, but also his wife and children to be sold?

Probably because they assisted in enlarging the debt, helped or gave occasion for its increase. This is a warning to those who in any way make themselves partakers of others' sins, particularly for parents and heads of families who are silent with regard to the sins of their household, do not punish them, or do even tell their inferiors to sin; to servants, and brothers and sisters who counsel one another to sin, help each other, take part therein, are silent when they should speak, do not hinder one another, yes, even protect each other in sin; especially to all those who contribute by word or deed, or by neglect of their duty, to any sin committed.

What is understood by the hundred pence?

By the hundred pence, about ten dollars according to our money, are understood the offences, committed against us, and which, in comparison with our debt against God, are something very insignificant.

What does Jesus intend to show by this parable?

He wishes to show, that if God is so merciful and forgives us our immense debts, we should be merciful and willingly forgive our fellowmen the small faults and offences, which they commit against us; he who does not do this, will also not receive pardon from God, indeed, in him shall be verified that which is said by the Apostle St. James: Judgment without mercy to him that hath not done mercy. (*James* ii. 13.)

Who are those who throttle their debtors?

These are in general the unmerciful, but in particular can be meant those who have no compassion on their debtors that cannot pay immediately; those who right away go to law and rest not until the debtor has sold house and property; those who oppress widows and orphans, if they own them anything, which is one of the sins crying to heaven for vengeance (*Eccl.* xxxv. 18.); those who even in just lawsuits act harshly and severely with their opponent, without the slightest giving way or agreement with him; finally, rulers and landlords who overburden their subjects with excessive tithes and taxes, and exact their share with the greatest rigor.

Who are those who accuse these hardened men before God?

They are the guardian angels and their own conscience; the merciless act itself cries to God for vengeance.

What is it to forgive from the heart?

It is to banish all hatred, ill will and revengeful desires from the heart, to treasure a true and sincere love towards our offenders and enemies not only in our hearts, but also manifest it externally by deeds of charity. Therefore those have not forgiven from their hearts, who, indeed, say and believe, that they have no ill will against their enemy, but everywhere avoid him, do not salute him, do not thank him, do not pray for him, do not speak with him, and do not help him in necessity, even when they can, but rather rejoice at his need.

INSTRUCTION ON THE VIRTUE OF PATIENCE.

Have patience with me. (*Matt.* xviii. 26.)

Since God has such great and continual patience with us, ought this not to move us to have patience likewise with the faults and weaknesses of our fellowmen, and to resign ourselves patiently in all our sufferings and tribulations to God's holy will? Or what will your impatience and surly behavior avail you? Will you thereby change or ease your sufferings? Do you by your impatience correct the faults of your neighbor? No; impatience, on the contrary, makes suffering more oppressive, misfortune greater, and the erring neighbor more obstinate, so that he will ultimately

refuse even mild and patient corrections. Besides impatience leads to many sins, to cursing, railery, quarrelling, contention, and murder. The pious Job gives us the finest example of real patience and resignation to the will of God. He was a wealthy, respected, and at the same time godfearing man in the land of Hus, he was father of seven sons and three daughters, and lived peacefully and happy. God wished to try him and permitted the devil to vent his whole rage upon him. Job was deprived of his children and all his property, and, finally, he was himself afflicted with the most painful disease of leprosy. But in the midst of all these dreadful misfortunes Job remained calm. Naked, covered only with a few patches, he sits on a dunghill, a picture of misery, and yet no sound of murmuring comes from his lips, he does not curse, does not blaspheme God, but says resignedly: God hath given it, God hath taken it away, God can give it again;

blessed be the name of the Lord. To all this misery was added the baseness of his own wife, who came and mocked him, and of three intimate friends, who instead of consoling him, judged him falsely and said, that his misery was just punishment from heaven. And still Job did not murmur against God's wise dispensations; with unshaken patience he held out with confidence in God, and God did not forsake him. He rewarded him well for his fidelity and patience. For He made him well again and gave him greater wealth than he had before. See what patience can do, what reward is in store for it! And thou, a Christian, a follower of Christ, the patient, crucified Lamb, art immediately so irritated, so angry and morose at every little cross which presses you! Be ashamed of your weakness, and learn from the pious Job, learn from Jesus, your Saviour, to practise the virtue of patience, for patience proves hope, and hope permits us not to be put to shame. Patience always carries off victory and may expect certain reward in heaven.

If you find an inclination for impatience in you, then make every day in the morning a resolution to battle bravely with this vice and often ask God for the virtue of patience in the following

PRAYER. O God, who hast humbled the pride of the old enemy by the patience of Thy only begotten Son, vouchsafe that we may devoutly consider what He has suffered for us, and accordingly suffer all that is contrary to us, through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, &c.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE TWENTY SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

AT the Introit of the Mass pray for the forgiveness of your sins with the priest: If thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities; Lord, who shall stand it? For with thee there is propitiation, O God of Israel. Out of the depths I have cried to thee, O Lord, Lord hear my voice. (*Ps.* cxxix.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, our refuge and strength, fountain of all goodness, mercifully give ear to the fervent prayers of Thy Church, and grant, that what we ask with faith, we may effectually obtain. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Philipp.* i. 6—11.) Brethren: We are confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good

work in you, will perfect it unto the day of Christ Jesus. As it is meet for me to think this for you all: for that I have you in my heart; and that in my bands, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel you are all partakers of my joy. For God is my witness, how I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. And this I pray, that your charity may more and more abound in knowledge and in all understanding; that you may approve the better things, that you may be sincere and without offence unto the day of Christ. Filled with the fruit of justice, through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

EXPLANATION. This epistle was written by St. Paul at Rome, where he was imprisoned for the faith, to the inhabitants of Philippi in Macedonia, who had been converted by him. He congratulates them, that they so willingly received and conscientiously obeyed the gospel which he had preached to them, and he says, he trusts in God to complete the good work which he has commenced in them, and will give them perseverance until the day of Christ, that is, until death.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxii. 15—21.) At that time: The Pharisees going, consulted among themselves how to ensnare Jesus in his speech. And they send to him their disciples, with the Herodians, saying: Master, we know that thou art a true speaker, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou dost not regard the person of men. Tell us therefore what thou dost think, Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not? But Jesus knowing their wickedness, said: Why do you tempt me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the coin or the tribute. And they offered him a penny. And Jesus saith to them: Whose image and inscription is this? They say to him: Cæsar's. Then he saith to them: Render therefore to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's: and to God, the things that are God's.

Why did the Pharisees wish to ensnare Jesus in His speech?

In order to find some reason to accuse Him before the emperor, or to make Him hateful to the Jews; for had He denied tribute to Cæsar, they would have accused Him before the emperor as guilty of high treason; had He, on the contrary, made it obligatory to pay tribute, then they would have denounced Him as a destroyer of liberty to the people, who considered themselves

a free nation owing allegiance only to God.— All those are like the Pharisees, who under the appearance of friendship only cause vexation and misfortune to their neighbor.

Who are hypocrites in reality?

Those who in order to cheat their neighbor, appear externally pious and holy, whilst internally they are full of malice; those who have honey on their tongues, but gall in their hearts, and sting like scorpions, when we least expect it. Because there are so many vices connected with hypocrisy (*Matt.* xxiii.), therefore Christ has denounced no sin more awfully than this one. Hypocrites are brethren of Cain, Joab, and Judas, of whom the first slyly deceived his brother and killed him, the second his cousin, and the third betrayed his master with a kiss. Better is an open enemy, before whom we can be on our guard than a hypocritical

friend, before whom we do not guard ourselves. Such false men are cursed by God. (*Mal.* i. 14.) I hate a mouth with a double tongue. (*Prov.* viii. 13.) "The devil silently possesses the hearts of hypocrites and quietly he sleeps in them, whilst he gives them no peace," says St. Gregory; and St. Jerome writes: "A pretended holiness is double malice."—Beware, therefore, my dear Christian, of the vice of hypocrisy, which is so hateful to God; endeavor always to be sincere with God, thyself, and thy neighbor, and to walk in true humility before God's face, then mayst thou carry the image of God within thee.

PRAYER. Help me, O Lord, for the number of the saints is decreasing and truth is becoming rare among men. Vanity they speak, each to his neighbor: their lips are deceitful, with double hearts speak they. Let the Lord destroy all deceitful lips and boasting tongues which say: We will magnify our tongues; our lips are our own; who is Lord over us? O Lord, deliver my soul from wicked lips and a deceitful tongue; give me grace to preserve Thy image in my soul by piety and virtue. Direct my heart to justice and keep it away from avarice, that I may give to each his own. (*Ps.* xi. *and* cxix.)

INSTRUCTION ON THE FOLLY OF HUMAN FEAR.

Thou art a true speaker, neither carest thou for any man, for thou dost not regard the person of men. (*Matt.* xxii. 16.)

IN this Christians ought especially to follow the Saviour, and not permit themselves to be frightened off from piety and the practice of virtue by human fear and that idle phantom: "What will people say?" What matters it, what people think and say of us, if we only please God? He alone can truly benefit or injure us; therefore he alone is to be feared, as Christ says: Fear not those that kill the body, and cannot kill the soul: but rather fear him that can destroy both soul and body in hell. (*Matt.* x. 28.)

How foolishly, therefore, do those act who through fear of displeasing certain people, are afraid to serve God and cultivate piety; who even go so far as to commit sin and offend God; who in order to be pleasing to others, oppress innocent, poor and forsaken people; who adopt the latest and most scandalous fashions and customs; those who eat meat on days of abstinence, or give it to others; those who sing sinful songs, or what is still worse, do not hesitate to ridicule sacred things to give others occasion to laugh, or to be considered a strong minded person. Implore God daily and sincerely, that He may take from you this vain

fear of men and give you instead the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom.

INSTRUCTION ON THE VALUE AND DIGNITY OF THE SOUL.

Whose image is this? (*Matt.* xxii. 20.)

THus we should often ask ourselves with respect to our soul, particularly when we are tempted to stain and ruin it by sin. Whose image is this? we should then say to ourselves, "Is it not the likeness of God, an image dyed in the blood of Jesus, an image for which the Saviour gave His life? Would I defile and deform this by sin and voluptuousness? God forbid!" Thus we should say to ourselves, such resolutions should we make. For in truth, what among all created things, except the angels, is more beautiful and more precious than a human soul, which is in the state of grace? "Could we," says St. Catherine of Sienna, "behold with our corporal eyes a soul in the state of grace, we would see with astonishment, that it surpasses in splendor all flowers, all stars, the whole world, and there is hardly a man that would not wish to die for such beauty." It is a dwelling of the Blessed Trinity! Christ did not give His life for all the goods and treasures of this earth, but for the human soul. And yet many estimate their soul so lightly, that they sell it for a momentary pleasure, for a present not worth a penny! For shame! The body we estimate so highly, that we take all pains to decorate it and keep it alive, and the image and likeness of God, the soul, we take no pains to keep in the state of grace, and do not adorn with virtues! What folly!

INSTRUCTION ON THE DUTY TO PAY TAXES OR TRIBUTE TO THE GOVERNMENT.

Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. (*Matt.* xxii. 21.)

TO pay tribute to the lawful government, is a duty of justice which the Spirit of God Himself commands us to faithfully fulfill. (*Rom.* xiii. 6, 7.) Christ Himself paid the customary ditrachma for Himself and St. Peter (*Matt.* xvii. 23.); "and if the Son of God Himself paid duty and tax," says St. Ambrose, "who art thou, O man, that thou wouldst free thyself from it?" The government must watch, that the life of its subjects be not injured with impunity, that their property be not endangered or robbed, that there be security on the high-ways, that peace, harmony and order be preserved among the citizens, that their temporal welfare be promoted, that sciences and arts flourish, &c. And for this teachers, judges, officers and soldiers are necessary, for whose support care must be taken, and whose trouble rewarded.

Besides this the government must care for the security of the country, for public streets and bridges, for the maintenance o churches, schools and other institutions necessary for the common good; to enable the government to perform these duties taxes are necessary and lawfully assessed. If you oppose these laws, you oppose God, for by Him the kings rule and lawgivers ordain, what is just; by Him princes rule and the mighty ordain justice. (*Prov.* viii. 15, 16.) Let the payment of duties rather be a work pleasing to God, because you pay them for love of God, willingly and resigned to His holy will as the early Christians did, who even served their heathenish government with pleasure, in all that was not contrary to God's will, and willingly rendered the duties.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE TWENTY THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

REMARK. If from Pentecost until Advent there be only twenty three Sundays, then the present one is omitted, and the Mass of the following Sunday, the twenty fourth, is said.

He Introit of the Mass consoles and incites us to confidence in God who is so benevolent towards us and will not let us pine away in tribulation. The Lord saith: I entertain thoughts of peace, not of affliction: you shall call on me, and I will hear you: and bring back your captive peopl from eall places. (*Jer.* xxix. 11.) Thou, O Lord, hast blessed thy land: thou hast brought back the captive children of Jacob. (*Ps.* lxxxiv.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Pardon, O Lord, we beseech Thee, the sins of thy people: that we may be delivered by Thy goodness from the guilt we have contracted by our own weakness. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Philipp.* iii. 17—21.; iv. 1—3.) Brethren: Be followers of me, and observe them who walk so as you have our model. For many walk, of whom I have told you often (and now tell you weeping) that they are enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame: who mind earthly things. But our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ, who will reform the body of our lowness, made like to the body of his

glory, according to the operation whereby also he is able to subdue all things unto himself. Therefore, my dearly beloved brethren, and most desired, my joy, and my crown: so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. I beg of Evodia, and I beseech Syntyche, to be of one mind in the Lord. And I entreat thee also my sincere companion, help those women that have laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement and the rest of my fellow labourers, whose names are in the book of life.

EXPLANATION. There are unhappily many Christians, as St. Paul, weeping, complains, who are declared enemies of Christ's cross, who do not wish to mortify their senses, but only serve their appetites, who only think of gratifying their lusts, and, as it were, find their only pleasure, even seek their honor in despising the way of Jesus and His saints on the narrow path of the cross, of mortification and humiliation, and, wallow like swine in the mire of the most shameful lusts. But what will be the end of these people? Eternal perdition! For he who does not crucify the flesh with its lusts, does not belong to Christ. (*Gal.* v. 24.) He who does not bear the marks of the mortification of Jesus in his body, in him the life of Christ shall not be manifested. (ii. *Cor.* iv. 10.) He who does not walk in heaven during his life-time, that is, who does not direct his thoughts and desires heavenward and despise the world and its vanities, will not find the entrance to heaven after his death.

ASPIRATION. Would to God, I could say with St. Paul: The world is crucified to me, and I to the world: (*Gal.* vi. 14.)

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* ix. 18—26.) At that time: As Jesus was speaking to the multitude: Behold, a certain ruler came up, and adored him, saying: Lord, my daughter is even now dead; but come lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. And Jesus rising up followed him, with his disciples. And behold, a woman who was troubled with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment. For she said within herself: If I shall touch only his garment, I shall be healed. But Jesus turning and seeing her, said: Be of good heart, daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour. And when Jesus was come into the house of the ruler, and saw the minstrels and the multitude making a rout, he

said: Give place: for the girl is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. And when the multitude was put forth, he went in and took her by the hand. And the maid arose. And the fame hereof went abroad into all that country.

INSTRUCTIONS. I. Filial was the faith, unbounded the confidence, profound the humility of this woman, and, therefore, she received health also. Learn from this, how pleasing is filial faith, firm confidence, and sincere humility to the Lord; let your prayer always be penetrated by these three virtues, and you will receive whatever you ask for.

II. The devout Louis de Ponte refers the conduct of this woman to our conduct at the holy Communion, and says: Christ

wished to remain with us in the most holy Eucharist, clothed with the garment of the sacramental species of bread, that he who receives His sacred flesh and blood, and brings his soul in connection with it, may be freed from the bloody flow of evil concupiscence. If you wish to obtain the integrity of your soul, as did this woman the health of the body, imitate her. Receive the flesh and blood of Jesus with the most profound humility, with the firmest confidence in His power and goodness, and in you also the fountain of sin, evil concupiscence, will be dried up.

III. Jesus called three dead persons to life, the twelve years old daughter of the ruler of the synagogue Jairus, of whom there is mention made in this gospel, the young man at Naim (*Luke* vii.), and Lazarus. (*John* iv.) Commentators say, that by these three dead persons three classes of sinners may be understood: by the maiden those who sin in their youth through weakness and fragility, but touched by the grace of God, perceive their fall and easily rise up again through penance, like this maiden raised up by the hand by Jesus; by the young man at Naim those are to be understood, who repeat the sins and permit them to become habits; these require greater grace, more trouble and severer penance, by Lazarus the public and obdurate habitual sinners are to be understood, who can be raised to spiritual life only by extraordinary grace of God and by public and most severe penance, as Jesus also raised Lazarus publicly with prayer and tears and loud calling.

IV. Christ did not raise the maiden, until the minstrels and noisy multitude were removed, by which He wished to teach us, that the raising or conversion of a soul cannot be accomplished in the midst of the noise and turmoil of temporal cares and idle pleasures and associations.

INSTRUCTION CONCERNING RIDICULE AND DERISION.

And they laughed him to scorn. (*Matt.* ix. 24.)

When Jesus told the minstrels and the crowd, that the girl was not dead, but sleeping, they laughed at Him, because they understood not what He said. Thus do carnal minded men generally at priests and ministers of God, if these by their words and examples admonish them to despise honors, riches and pleasures, and to embrace the love of poverty, humility and mortification: for this is an unintelligible and hateful language to them, at which they laugh and mock, just as they do when they hear, that death is a sleep, from which we shall sometime awake and shall be obliged to appear at the judgment-seat. But woe to such scoffers by whose scoffs so many souls are led from the path of virtue! What the devil formerly accomplished by tyrants in estranging men from God and a lively faith in Him and His Church,

he seems to wish to accomplish in our days by the mockery, scoffs, and blasphemies of wicked men; for at no period have piety and virtue, holy simplicity and childlike faith, faithful adherence to the holy Roman Church and her laws, reverence for her head and her ministers, the priests, been more mocked at, derided and blasphemed. And, unhappily, many permit themselves to be induced by mockery to abondon piety, to omit the public practice of their faith, to conceal their Catholic persuasion, and to lead a lukewarm, unchurchlike, indeed, sinful life. But woe to the scoffers! they are hateful to God (*Prov.* iii. 32.) who will one day require all the souls perverted by them, from their hands. Do not let these scoffers turn you aside from your adherence to your holy faith, and from the public practice of it, and from zeal for virtue, remember the words of Jesus: He who denies me before men, him I will also deny before my Father who is in heaven. (*Matt.* x. 33.) Console yourself with Jesus who was scoffed and blasphemed for your sake, and often say within yourself:

I know, my most amiable Jesus, that the servant cannot be more than his master. Since Thou wert so often sneered at, mocked and blasphemed, why should I wonder, if I am laughed at and mocked for my faith in Thee and Thy Church and for the practice of virtue!

INSTRUCTION FOR THE TWENTY FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

REMARK. The Mass of this Sunday is always the last, even if there are more than twenty four Sundays after Pentecost; in that case the Sundays remaining after the Epiphany, which are noticed in the calendar, are inserted between the twenty third and the Mass of the twenty fourth Sunday.

THE Introit of the Mass is the same that is said on the twenty third Sunday after Pentecost.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Stir up, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the hearts of Thy faithful: that, becoming more zealous in the performance of good works, they may receive from Thy goodness more effectual remedies for their disorders. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Col.* i. 9—14.) BRETHREN: We cease not to pray for you, and to beg that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom, and spiritual understanding: that you may walk worthy of God, in all things pleasing: being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the

knowledge of God: strengthened with all might, according to the power of his glory, in all patience and long-suffering with joy. Giving thanks to God the Father, who hath made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the remission of sins.

EXPLANATION. In this epistle St. Paul teaches us, that we should continually pray for our neighbor, according to his example, and thank God especially for the light of the true, only saving faith. Let us endeavor to imitate St. Paul in his love and zeal for the salvation of the soul, then we shall also one day partake of his glorious reward in heaven.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxiv. 15—35.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: When you shall see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place: he that readeth, let him understand. Then they that are in Judea, let them flee to the mountains; and he that is on the house-top, let him not come down to take any thing out of his house: and he that is in the field, let him not go back to take his coat. And wo to them that are with child, and give suck in those days. But pray that your flight be not in the winter, or on the Sabbath. For there shall be then great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, neither shall be. And unless those days had been shortened, no flesh could be saved: but for the sake of the elect, those days shall be shortened. Then if any man shall say to you: Lo, here is Christ, or there: do not believe him: For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch as to deceive (if possible) even the elect. Behold, I have told it you, before hand, if therefore they shall say to you: Behold, he is in the desert; go ye not out: Behold, he is in the closets, believe it not. For as lightning cometh out of the east, and appeareth even into the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. Wheresoever the body shall be, there shall the eagles also be gathered together.

And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be moved: and there shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all tribes of the earth mourn: and they shall see the Son of Man, coming in the clouds of heaven with much power and majesty. And he shall send his angels with a trumpet, and a great voice: and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the farthest parts of the heavens to the utmost bounds of them. And from the fig-tree learn a parable: when the

branch thereof is now tender, and the leaves come forth, you know that summer is nigh. So you also, when you shall see all these things, know ye that it is nigh even at the doors. Amen, I say to you, that this generation shall not pass, till these things be done. Heaven and earth shall pass, but my words shall not pass.

EXPLANATION. When you shall see the abomination of desolation. The abomination of desolation, of which Daniel (ix. 27.) and Christ here speak, is the desecration of the temple and the city of Jerusalem, which was accomplished by the rebellious Jews by perpetrating the most abominable vices, injustices, and robberies, &c., but principally by the heathenish Romans by their putting up of their idols. This destruction which was accomplished about forty years after Christ's death in the most awful manner, is here foretold, according to the testimony of St. Luke (xxi. 20.), by Christ. But at the same time He speaks of the end of the world and of His coming to judgment, of which the desolation of Jerusalem was a figure.

Pray, that your flight be not in the winter or on the Sabbath. Because, as St. Jerome says, the severe coldness which reigns in the deserts and mountains, would prevent the people from going thither and put themselves into security, and because it was forbidden by the law for the Jews to travel on the Sabbath.

There shall rise false Christs and false prophets. According to the testimony of the Jewish historian Josephus who was an eye-witness of the destruction of Jerusalem, Eleazar, John, Simon, &c., were such, who under the pretence of helping the Jews, threw them into still greater misfortunes; but before the end of the world, it will be Antichrist with his followers, whom St. Paul on account of his diabolical malice and cruelty, calls the man of sin and the son of perdition (ii. *Thess.* ii. 3.), who through devilish malice against all that is called God and is revered as divine, will rise up, proclaim himself God, sit in the temple, and kill all who will not recognize him as such. Even the holy and just will be in danger of being seduced, but for their sake God will shorten the time of the persecution of this tyrant.

Wheresoever the body shall be, there shall the eagles also be gathered together. St. Jerome sees in this a picture of Christ, for he says, that just as the eagles hasten from all sides to a body which they chance to see, so will the just hasten towards the Redeemer, who will appear like lightning, and will gather around Him. We may also understand by the eagles, wicked demons who will rush upon the damned like eagles.

This generation shall not pass, till all these things be done. With these words Christ determines the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, and says, that many of His listeners would

live to see it, which also happened. But when the end of the world will come, He says, not even the angels in heaven know. (*Matt.* xxiv. 36.) Let us endeavor to be always ready for the coming of the divine Judge by leading a holy life.

[See the account of the Destruction of Jerusalem on the Ninth Sunday after Pentecost.]

PRAYER. Grant, O Lord! that we may consider all as the abomination of desolation of the holy places, which is calculated to rob us of Thy love. Grant, that we may avoid and shun this loss as the death and certain destruction of our souls. Break the bonds with which we are tied to the world, that we may not be lost with it. Give us the wings of eagles, that we may soar above all worldly things by the contemplation of Thy sufferings, Thy life and death, that we may hasten towards Thee now, and gather about Thee, that we may not become a prey to the rapacious enemy on the day of judgment. Amen.

INSTRUCTION CONCERNING PERJURY.

Amen, I say to you. (*Matt.* xxiv. 34.)

THE Son of God here and elsewhere in the gospel, confirms His words by an oath, as it were, in as much as He calls upon His divine truthfulness as witness of them; for swearing is nothing else than to call upon God, His divine truthfulness, justice, or upon His creatures in the name of God, as witness of the truth of our words.—It may now be asked, when is it allowed to swear? Answer: When justice, necessity or an important advantage require it, and the cause is true and equitable. (*Jerem.* iv. 2.) Those sin grievously, therefore, who swear on account of a cause, which is false and unjust, because they call upon God as witness of falsehood and injustice, by which His eternal truthfulness and justice is desecrated; those sin who swear on account of a truthful cause, but without necessity and sufficient reason, because it is disrespectful to call upon God as witness for every little thing; those sin grievously and are in a state of continual sin, who are so accustomed to swearing, that they without knowing or considering, whether the thing is true or not, whether they wish to keep their promise or not, or whether they will be able to keep it, immediately break out into oaths, for they expose themselves to swear falsely: "there is no one," says St. Chrysostom, "who swears often and does not sometimes swear falsely, just as he who speaks much, sometimes says unbecoming and false things." Therefore, according to the explanation of St. Augustine, Christ tells Christians, who seek after perfection, not to swear at all (*Matt.* v. 34.), that they may not come from swearing to a habit of swearing, and

from this to perjury. He who has the habit of swearing, should, therefore, take the greatest pains to lay aside the bad habit, and to do so it will be very useful to reflect, that we shall have to render a strict account for every unnecessary, useless and false oath, since every idle word even will be severely judged one day (*Matt.* xii. 36.), and that those who so easily swear, will be believed less than others; also that God's blessing is taken from him who commits perjury, that God's curse accompanies him in all his ways, as proved by daily experience, that he who commits perjury in court, robs himself of the merits of Christ's death and will be consumed in the fire of hell, which is represented by the crucifix and burning tapers, in presence of which the oath (in some places) is taken. And if you have had the misfortune to perjure yourself, you should at once be truly sorry and should weep for this terrible sin which you have committed, should frankly confess it, repair the injury you may have caused by it, and by rigorous penance chastise yourself for it.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF A CHURCH'S DEDICATION.

Why do we celebrate this feast annually?

To remind us of the day on which a Church was consecrated to God, and to give Him due thanks for having deigned to select a place among us for His dwelling, for having shown us so many favors in it, and for preserving us in the true faith.

Is the consecration of a Church and the celebration of its anniversary a modern custom?

By no means; for we read in the Scriptures, that Moses anointed and sanctified the tabernacle, and that Solomon built a beautiful temple to the Lord and solemnized its consecration during fourteen days in a most magnificent manner, that the anniversary of this consecration was observed by the Jews, and that Christ attended this anniversary celebration. (iii. *Kings* viii.; *John* x. 22.) The first Christians also consecrated their Churches, and solemnly commemorated the anniversary of its celebration, as the old martyrology, ascribed to St. Jerome, mentions the consecration of the first Church in Rome, supposed to have been performed by St. Peter. Of course, the Churches of the first Christians were not consecrated with as much solemnity as in our times, because even the divine service had to be performed in secret and by night, on account of the persecutions; but when the persecutions ceased during the reign of Constantine who was himself a Christian, the

Churches were consecrated with the greatest magnificence and the most splendid ceremonies.

What are these ceremonies?

1. On the day previous to the consecration, the bishop and the faithful fast, because we can become spiritual temples of God only by mortification and penitential works, and only thus can enter the heavenly Jerusalem of which the Church is a symbol. 2. The relics of the saints which are to be enclosed in the altar, are preserved outside the Church walls in a tent or other suitable place, to remind us that the saints groaned in the dress of mortality, like pilgrims and strangers, until the Lord opened to them the gates of heaven. 3. Twelve crosses are painted upon the Church walls, with a candle under each to be lighted at the commencement of the consecration. The cross is eminently the Christian's badge, the twelve candles represent the twelve apostles whom our Lord Himself calls the Light of the World, and admonish us to live as children of light, adhering to the precepts of the apostolic Church. 4. The bishop says the penitential psalms before the Church door, blesses salt and water, with which he sprinkles himself as well as the bystanders, goes with the clergy and people around the Church three times, sprinkling the outer walls with holy water, and at every round knocking with his crozier at the door which is not opened until the third time, when he makes the sign of the cross on the threshold, saying: "Behold the sign of the cross; let all evil spirits depart." The penitential psalms are to remind us, that the road to the kingdom of God passes only by the way of conversion of life; the blessing of water and salt and the sprinkling with them, that only the pure can enter heaven which is closed to the impure; the triple knocking, that we must pray with perseverance and contend for heaven, as Christ says (*Matt.* vii. 7.); and the sign of the cross on the threshold reminds us, that the devil, the strong man armed, as Christ calls him, is not driven from this world without violence and much battling. 5. The bishop with his assistants enters the Church, which is still closed to the other clergy and the people, by which we are reminded of Christ's entrance with a number of the saints into heaven, and the establishment of the Church triumphant there. 6. The bishop then intones the hymn "Come Creator Spirit", for from Him, the Holy Ghost, comes every blessing and sanctification; the floor of the Church is strown with ashes in the form of a cross, and the bishop with his crozier writes the Greek and Latin alphabets in them, while the choir sing the "Benedictus", thus representing the union of both peoples, the Jews and the Gentiles, in one faith and one Church, and also that the congregation belongs to that Church which especially celebrates its service in the Greek and Latin tongues. 7. The bishop now blesses a certain mixture of water, salt, ashes, and wine, which is called the Gregorian Water, because

Pope Gregory introduced it (*Lib.* 11. *ep.* 86.), and sprinkles the walls and altar with it; the water represents Christ's humanity, the wine His divinity, the ashes are a figure of death, and the salt of incorruption; the mixture of these symbolizes Christ who, true God and true man, died and by His resurrection lives eternally. Through Him alone are the faithful purified and fitted to be the temples and dwelling places of God. 8. The bishop, with his crozier, signs a cross upon the inside upper and lower parts of the doors, as a sign to all the enemies of peace and blessing to fly from its threshold, and to invoke the plenitude of all graces for those that pass over it. 9. The bishop anoints the five crosses which are engraven in the altar-stone, with holy oil and chrism. The altar represents Christ, the crosses His five sacred wounds, from which flowed upon us blessings and salvation for time and eternity, the anointing is in commemoration of the mysterious anointing of Christ, by which He was made king, prophet, and priest of the New Testament, and reminds us of the blessings which stream to us from the altar, on which Christ offers Himself in the holy Sacrifice. 10. After this, the relics are taken from the place in which they have been preserved, and carried in procession around the Church, while the people repeat the "Kyrie eleison, Lord, have mercy on us"; from which we learn, that we must follow the saints under the leadership of Christ, if we would enter the Church triumphant in heaven, and that we must always implore God for mercy and grace for this end. 11. The relics are then brought into the Church, a hymn of joy and praise being chanted at their entrance; this to remind us of the joy of the saints when Christ shall conduct all His elect into heaven. 12. The relics are finally enclosed in the altar, and the stone which encloses them, cemented by the bishop with mortar made with the Gregorian water; this enclosing signifies, that the saints are perfectly united with Christ, and that whatever we ask through their intercession, we obtain only through Christ and His infinite merits. 13. One of the priests now goes around the altar several times, incensing it; the priest represents the angel in the Apocalypse (viii. 3, 4.) who stood before the altar with a golden thurible, and placed much incense, that is, the prayers of the saints, upon the golden altar before the throne of God. 14. This done, the bishop anoints the twelve crosses on the walls with chrism, incensing them three times, showing us, by so doing, the graces granted to those who faithfully observe the apostolic instructions. 15. After this anointing, the bishop forms five crosses out of five grains of blessed incense, which he places on the five crosses, carved in the stone, and over each cross of incense puts one of wax, lighting the upper part of them, so that the incense may be kindled and consumed. The burning wax and incense represent the fire of grace coming from the Holy Ghost and always burning on the altar, and prayer lighted and burning in the fire of

divine love, as also the gifts and offerings which the faithful may in future offer to the Lord on this newly consecrated altar, which will be acceptable to Him only through the cross and wounds of His divine Son. 16. This done, some further anointings are made at the altar, the new, fresh altar-cloths, vestments, chalices, &c., are blessed, the altar is covered with the blessed cloths, the cross and candlesticks placed upon it, and the unbloody Sacrifice of the New Law is for the first time offered upon it by the bishop. (*Himiob. and Liturgy by Marzohl, &c.*)

Why are Churches thus consecrated?

That, as far as human ability permits, a worthy dwelling may be prepared for the Almighty, where we may adore Him and offer our sacrifices; that we may know how holy is the place upon the consecration of which so much trouble and care are bestowed and in which God dwells; that we may have a place in which we can meet together for divine worship, hear the word of God, assist at the holy Sacrifice, and receive the Sacraments; that our piety may be increased by the holiness of the place, our reverence excited, and our zeal for the service of the Most High more and more inflamed.

At the Introit the Church prays in the words Jacob used concerning the place in which God appeared to him, that all may be inspired with reverence for places consecrated to God: Terrible is this place; it is the house of God and the gate of heaven, and shall be called the court of God. (*Gen.* xxviii. 17.) How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! My soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord. (*Ps.* lxxxii. 2.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God wo dost renew to us every year the day of the consecration of this Thy holy temple, and dost ever bring us again in safety to the holy mysteries, graciously hear the prayers of Thy people, and grant that whoever enters this temple to implore blessings, may rejoice in having obtained all his requests. Through our Lord, &c.

LESSON. (*Apoc.* xxi. 2—4.) IN THOSE DAYS: I John saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven, from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice from the throne, saying: Behold the tabernacle of God with men, and he will dwell with them. And they shall be his people: and God himself with them shall be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and death shall be no more, nor mourning,

nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away. And he that sat on the throne said: Behold, I make all things new.

EXPLANATION. This lesson, it is true, contains a description of the heavenly Jerusalem, or the Church triumphant in heaven, represented as a bride adorned for her husband, that we may arrive at some idea of the eternal happiness of the just, and that we may be encouraged to present our soul, adorned with virtue and piety, to her bridegroom Christ Jesus; but the Church on this day applies this figure to the house of God which by the consecration becomes, so to speak, a bride adorned for God a heavenly Jerusalem and in which He establishes His dwelling, that He may live always with men and may enrich them with the treasures of His grace.

What awe and reverence are, therefore, due to the temples of God, since He has taken up His dwelling within them, remaining in them as in His palace to hear and grant the requests of all who pray to Him!

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xix. 1—10.) At that time: Jesus entering in, he walked through Jericho. And behold, there was a man named Zacheus, who was the chief of the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus, who he was, and he could not for the crowd, because he was low of stature. And running before he climbed up into a sycamore tree that he might see him: for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus was come to the place, looking up he saw him, and said to him: Zacheus, make haste and come down: for this day I must abide in thy house. And he made haste and came down, and received him with joy. And when all saw it, they murmured, saying, that he was gone to be a guest with a man that was a sinner. But Zacheus standing said to the Lord: Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor: and if I have wronged any man of any thing, I restore him four-fold. Jesus said to him: This day is salvation come to this house; because he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

INSTRUCTIONS. I. Zacheus was a toll-gatherer, that is, one of those who in collecting the revenues committed many injustices, were slaves to avarice and usury, and were, therefore, called

publicans or public sinners. But as Zacheus wished to see our Saviour, Christ anticipated his desire. He invited Zacheus to receive Him, and when He found how cordially he received Him, how ready he was to repair all his injustice, and to sin no more, Christ let salvation come upon his house, that is, forgiveness of his sins, receiving him among the children of God. How willingly does our Lord visit us also! His happiness is to be with the children of men. (*Prov.* viii. 3.) Why do we not respond to His desire? Why do we not offer our hearts as a perpetual dwelling to Him? In the holy Communion He comes really, truly, and substantially to every one who receives Him. Why do we not receive holy Communion oftener? And when we do, let us imitate the toll-gatherer Zacheus, restore illgotten goods, detest all our sins, seriously purpose to become better, excite a longing desire for Jesus, and

He will come, make us children of God and give us salvation and blessing.

II. The visit which Christ paid Zacheus, is somewhat similar to the custom of inviting and visiting one another on the feast of the Church's dedication, which, however, should be done with the principal intention of enjoying ourselves spiritually, because God has chosen a dwelling for Himself in this place, and to congratulate one another, that we have the one only saving faith. But what is done instead of this? Alas! who can describe all the dissipations, inordinate feastings, strifes, and scandals, by which this feast is desecrated and abused in our days! Even the heathens were not as intemperate and dissipated at their pleasure feasts, as some Christians of our days are at this ecclesiastical feast. Is this becoming to Christians, to adherents of Christ, to temples of the Holy Ghost? Do we thus thank God for His graces and benefits which He grants during the year in His temples?.... Is it then wonderful, that God does not hear our prayers in the Church and sends curses instead of blessings?..... Sensible and believing Christians ought to be ashamed to assist at this feast in such a manner, and Christian governments ought to take pains to abolish such dissipations and scandals, by which God, the greatest good, is so greatly offended.

INSTRUCTION ON THE SPIRITUAL TEMPLE WHICH IS MAN HIMSELF.

You are a temple of the living God, as God says: I will dwell in them. (ii. *Cor.* vi. 16.)

ST. Bernard justly remarks, that the festival of the Church's dedication is also our festival; for we also are temples and, indeed, living temples of God, for which we were no less solemnly consecrated in holy Baptism, than are Churches of wood and stone. And in reality the ceremonies, made use of in Baptism, have so great a resemblance to those, used at the consecration of a Church, that a baptized man is no less than a consecrated Church, a pure and holy temple or dwelling of God; and indeed:

1) a pure temple; for just as a Church is first purified by repeated prayer, by exorcising the devil, by sprinkling and washing with blessed salt, by signing with the holy cross, and the incensing with incense, from all diabolical malice and impurities: so also are we purified in Baptism from all diabolical malice, from all sin and stain by repeated prayers, by exorcisms of Satan, by frequent signing with the cross, by breathing of the priest, and, finally, by the triple sprinkling of holy water with the invocation of the most Holy Trinity, and are consecrated pure temples of God. From this, as St. Augustine says, follows the duty to keep ourselves in the purity, obtained by baptism, and to suffer

nothing in our hearts which might offend the eyes of so pure a God. Woe to those who desecrate and pollute the temple of God! God Himself, says St. Paul (i. *Cor.* iii. 17.), will destroy them. Now the temple of the heart is desecrated and polluted by every mortal sin, especially by impurity: and when we sin, it is the same as if we drive God from His temple and give it over to the devil or set up an idol in it. How disgraceful is this to the majesty of God! But what must be done, when it has really happened? We must drive the devil from our hearts by sincere penance, destroy the idol, and cleanse the temple of the heart with the blood of the Lamb by receiving the holy Sacraments, consecrate it anew, as a desecrated temple is consecrated again.

2) We should be holy temples in which God is adored in spirit and in truth, as He demands (*John* iv. 23.), and in which He is served in sanctity and justice. (*Luke* i. 74, 75.) The sanctity of God as well as the other ceremonies of Baptism, in which the Christian, like a Church, is repeatedly anointed and sanctified with holy oil and chrism, demands this. Sanctity, therefore, is something essential to a baptized person, and he is no true Christian, who is not holy or at least does not seek holiness. Nor is it so difficult or impossible to obtain this sanctity as some think; for it only consists in the love of God and in the exact performance of the divine will. Difficult or impossible it is by no means to love God and accomplish His will, because God who assists the weak (ii. *Cor.* xii. 9.), immediately and always gives His grace to those who really wish this, and nothing can be against us, when God is for us. (*Rom.* viii. 31.)

PRAYER OF ST. AUGUSTINE. O God! who didst not make me Thy temple on account of my own preceding merits, but only by Thy grace in holy Baptism, grant, that I may always be a pure and holy temple for Thee. Cleanse it from all vices, decorate it with all virtues pleasing to Thee, and do not permit, that there should ever be anything in this Thy dwelling that might be displeasing to the eyes of Thy majesty. Finally, grant also, that I may one day be used in the building of the heavenly Jerusalem as a living stone, which has been sufficiently carved and shapen by the tribulations of this world. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE MONDAY FOLLOWING THE FEAST OF THE CHURCH'S DEDICATION.

N very many parishes in the country as well as in cities, the beautiful and consoling practice prevails of having on the day following the feast of the dedication of the Church special service for the deceased parishioners, and to pray for departed souls.

The thought, that the deceased faithful, though they have departed for another world and no longer walk among us, still belong to the communion of the holy Church, and are united to us by the tie of love which reaches beyond the grave, is at the foundation of this beautiful custom. They, too, shall yet partake of the graces which are implored by prayer in the consecrated house of God, dispensed to the living and the dead by the most holy Sacrifice, since prayers and the holy Sacrifice are offered up for the repose of their souls in the Church, where they once lingered.

On this day we should, therefore, assist at the service for the dead with the intention of praying for all departed parishioners, but particularly for those who are entirely forgotten, for whom prayers are no longer said and the holy Sacrifice offered.

Whilst the priest is keeping the Vigil, those present may say the rosary in silence for the dead; during the Mass they should unite their prayer with that of the priest, and at the Libera all should pray with their whole heart, that God may grant His happiness very soon to the souls of the departed. After the Libera the priest usually says five Paters and Aves with the Creed. At the conclusion the following (or another similar) prayer is said:

PRAYER. O God! who alone canst give means of salvation after death, grant, we beseech Thee, to all those who have departed from our midst and rest in this cemetery, the remission of their sins and the punishment for them. Show them Thy mercy, and forgive them whatever they have committed against Thy holy law in their dealings with men and through human weakness, and did not expiate with tears of penance. Do not judge according to the rigor of Thy justice, but according to the multitude of Thy mercies, and do not remember the sins of their youth, but show them Thy un-

speakable goodness, that it may be for their salvation to have believed and hoped in Thee. Through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost for all eternity. Amen.

℣. Lord, grant eternal rest to the souls of the faithful departed,
℟. and let perpetual light shine upon them!
℣. May they rest in peace.
℟. Amen.

GOFFINE'S

ECCLESIASTICAL YEAR.

PART II.

INSTRUCTION ON THE VENERATION AND INVOCATION OF THE SAINTS

WITH

EXPLANATIONS OF THE EPISTLES AND GOSPELS
OCCURRING ON THEIR FEASTS,
AND OF
DOCTRINAL POINTS SUGGESTED BY THEM,
&c. &c.

After this I saw a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and tribes, and peoples and tongues: standing before the throne and in the sight of the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. And they cried with a loud voice, saying: Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb!

(*Apoc.* vii. 9, 10.)

PRELIMINARY INSTRUCTIONS
ON THE VENERATION AND INVOCATION OF SAINTS.

What is the doctrine of the Catholic Church concerning the veneration and invocation of saints?

From the earliest times of the Christian religion it has been the accepted, and according to the consent of the fathers and of the Councils of the Church the praiseworthy custom to make commemoration of the saints in heaven on festival days, dedicated to them, and to honor their pictures and relics; that the saints who are reigning with Christ (*Apoc.* xx. 4. 6.), may make intercession for man, and therefore it is useful and well, that we humbly invoke them and have recourse to their assistance and intercession. (*Conc. Trid. Sess.* 25.)

Why are the saints to be venerated?

Because they are the friends of Christ, reign with Him and possess eternal salvation (ii. *Tim.* ii. 12.), having faithfully followed Him on earth, and with St. Paul fought the good fight (ii. *Tim.* iv. 7.); because they are living members of the Church, through the bond of affection (*Col.* iii. 14.) are united with us as friends and brothers, heartily love us and take great interest in our welfare (*Luke* xv. 7.), and therefore pray for us to God. (ii. *Machab.* xv. 14.)

But does not the veneration of saints diminish the honor due to God?

Not in the least, since all the honor shown to the saints is referred to God alone, whose friends and servants they are, and who has wonderfully revealed Himself in them. (*Ps.* lxvii. 36.) This veneration, therefore, cannot diminish the honor due to God, but on the contrary increases it.

How should the saints be honored?

As servants and friends of God and joint heirs with Christ, and glorified members of His body, who heartily love and by their intercession aid us, but not as God, nor as if they could aid us by their own power; we are, therefore, not permitted to adore them, or show them divine honors.

What difference is there between veneration and worship?

Worship is the greatest of all honor, due to God only, which is exercised when we acknowledge God as the highest good and

as creatures submit ourselves to Him with deepest reverence. Besides this the word worship, in Scripture as well as in ancient profane writers, signifies an external reverence, a low bow, &c. (*Exod.* xxiii. 7, xxxvii. 29, xxvii. 7.; ii. *Kings* xviii. 21, iii. *Kings* i. 16.) Thus, when we read, that David bowing himself down to the ground (before Saul), worshipped, it is decidedly not to be understood to mean such a worship as we owe to God alone, but merely a rendering of external honor. In this sense the Church uses the word worship in regard to the cross of Christ. Veneration is nothing more than an outward sign of the esteem which we have for the dignity and merits of others. If we bow before the pictures of Christ and the saints, before their relics, or bend the knee to them, these external honors refer to those who are represented by the pictures, or whose relics are there. Princes and their portraits are venerated in the same manner in our days, without being worshipped.

How do we best show our veneration for the saints?

By rejoicing, and wishing them happiness, because of the great honor and glory they have acquired by faithful cooperation with God's grace, by continual practice of virtue, and performance of good works, thanking and praising God for them. When we do not seek to imitate them, "then," says St. Augustine, "the saints are not gladdened by our veneration, but are pleased only, when we imitate their virtuous examples. To venerate without imitating them, is simply to falsely flatter them." We also venerate them by devoutly and sacredly observing their festivals, by which it must not be understood, that merely resting from work means to keep the festival devoutly and sacredly. If asked their opinion of the manner in which many Christians observe their festivals, the saints would perhaps answer as God did the Jews: "My soul hateth your new moons, and your solemnities: they are become trouble some to me, I am weary of bearing them (*Isai* i. 14.); for with all your seeming devotion, your hands are empty of good works, and filled with iniquity; dissolve the bonds of sin and learn to do good—then your devotion will be pleasing to us." Finally, we venerate them when with proper confidence we turn to them in our cares, and seek their intercession.

Are we to invoke the saints?

Assuredly, for the intercession of saints is taught by the holy Scriptures. When thou didst pray with tears, and didst bury the dead, I offered thy prayers to the Lord, said the Angel Raphael to Tobias (*Tob.* xii. 12.); St. Paul asked for the intercession of his living brethren (i. *Thess.* 25.), and God Himself advised it to the friends of the pious Job. (*Job.* xli. 8.) If the doctrine of the holy Scriptures permits us to ask the living for their intercession, why should we not be allowed to ask the intercession of the saints who kneel before the throne of God and

gaze upon His countenance? The Church has always taught, that it is useful and good to invoke the intercession of the saints, and has at all times practised it. The unbelievers who abuse the veneration of saints, seek the intercession of the living without regarding it as a circuitous path to God; why should not as much be granted to the saints, who are the glorified members of the body of Christ?

But since the saints are not omniscient, can they hear our prayers?

They do not need to be omniscient to know for what we pray. Cannot God let them be aware of our cares? The angels know the conversion of a sinner and rejoice over it (*Luke* xv. 10.), they hear the prayers and know the good works of the pious (*Tob.* xii. 12.); they bring them as a pleasant gift to the sight of God (*Apoc.* viii. 3.). Cannot the same be said of the saints, since they are like the angels and possess the same glory? (*Matt.* xxii. 30.) Did not Onias and Jeremias receive, after their death, knowledge of the afflictions of the Jewish people, and pray to God for them? (ii. *Mach.* xv. 12.) We need not be anxious in regard to the manner in which the saints become cognizant of our prayers, since God has a thousand ways in which to let our needs be known to them.

On what do we base our faith, that the saints pray for us?

On the doctrine of the communion of saints, according to which the most intimate spiritual communion exists between all the members of the Church as members of the body of Christ, so that in the spiritual possessions of one the others have part, and it is the heart's wish of each, that others should share in that which he possesses, for which reason they pray for each other constantly (*James* v. 16.; *Apoc.* v. 8.); and also on the great charity of the saints which was theirs while here, and by which they were enabled to sacrifice everything, often even their lives, for the welfare of their fellow creatures. This love does not cease after death, for love never dies (i. *Cor.* xiii. 8.), and they have carried it with them to heaven, where they now love us more than ever, and certainly show their love by praying for us; for they know from their own experience to what dangers our welfare is exposed, and how much we are in need of God's assistance.

In what sense do we seek the intercession of the saints?

Not in the sense that implies, that we cannot and dare not turn directly to God and Christ, but because we consider ourselves, as sinners, unworthy to appear in the sight of God whom we have offended by sin, and so hope to obtain mercy and compassion through the prayers of the saints, which avail much with God (*John* ix. 31.; *James* v. 16.) We, therefore, think it useful and good to seek help from the prayers of the saints, so that we may receive grace from God through His Son, our Lord, who alone is our

Redeemer and Saviour. (*Conc. Trid. Sess.* 25.) Thus the invocation is not opposed to the invocation of God, for we invoke God as the Giver of grace and the Author of all good (*James* i. 17.), and this invocation of Him is an act of adoration; but when we invoke the saints, we invoke them as mediators who will request with us and for us from God through Jesus Christ that which we require. For this reason all the prayers of the Church end with the words: Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

But does not the intercession of saints diminish the mediatorship of Christ, as the heretics maintain?

Not in the least. According to the faith of the Catholic Church, Christ through His work of redemption is the only mediator between God and man, asking for the sake of His own merits, mercy and compassion for us from God. But the saints are our intercessors and mediators in this sense, that they may pray for us, that God will be merciful to us because of the merits of Christ, and their intercession is only heard on account of Christ.

Is not Christ's intercession sufficient?

It is superfluous, and yet St. Paul asks the intercession of the faithful: Watching with all instance and supplication for all the saints: and for me. (*Eph.* vi. 18, 19.; *Hebr.* xiii. 16.) Are we wiser than this holy apostle?

Can the saints through their own power give us that for which we pray?

The Roman Catechism says: "We do not invoke the saints in the same manner that we do God; we pray to God, that He Himself may give us the good; but we pray to the saints, that they, since they are pleasing to God, may be our intercessors, and obtain from Him that which we need." For this reason we say in the litanies of God: Have mercy on us, hear us! in the litanies of the saints: Pray for us!

What qualities must the veneration have to correspond with the sense of the Church and be agreeable to God and the saints?

It must be directed above all to the honor of God and for the salvation of our soul, as St. Jerome says: "We honor the servants, so that the honor of the servants may redound to the honor of God." It could not possibly please the saints, who regard the honor of God far more than their own, if the honor of God should suffer in the least by the veneration given them. Consequently, the first and most important quality of the veneration of the saints is, that we are encouraged thereby to adore and glorify God, through whose grace the saints attained such a high degree of sanctity and happiness. The devotion to the saints must also make us pious, virtuous, and saintly, that is, if we seek to venerate the saints, we must emulate their example; we must always conform

to the will of God in that which we desire from the saints, be they spiritual or corporal favors, and not ask anything unjust, unreasonable, or injurious to our salvation; and, lastly, we must seek to make ourselves, by a pious life, worthy of it.

What difference in the veneration of different saints is made by the Catholic Church?

The feasts of some saints are celebrated with much more solemnity than others, and the faithful are permitted to venerate some saints more than others. The reason of this is, that according to the faith of the Catholic Church, there is a certain regularity among the saints in accordance with their dignity and sanctity. Christ did not say without meaning: In my Father's house are many mansions (*John* xiv. 2.), nor without reason St. Paul: One is the glory of the sun, another the glory of the moon, and another the glory of the stars. For star differeth from star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. (i. *Cor.* xv. 41, 42.) In this manner the Church permits certain saints to be especially venerated and invoked as patrons or protectors of different countries, Churches, as patron-saints, and over each and all stations of life, so that in dangers of body and soul we may acquire aid and comfort through their intercession, and that we may fervently imitate their practice of virtue.

Why is more honor shown to Mary, the beloved Mother of the Son of God, than to other saints?

Because she is the Mother of the Son of God our Redeemer, and is therefore the Queen of Saints. Why should not she be honored and praised above all saints who is full of grace, with whom is the Lord, and who is blessed among women (*Luke* i. 28.); who in the spirit of a prophet said of herself: From henceforth all generations shall call me blessed, and concerning whom a woman among the people cried out: Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the paps that gave thee suck! (*Luke* xi. 27.) For similar reasons St. Joseph deserves next after Mary a special veneration, because he on account of his sanctity was chosen from among all men to be the fosterfather of Christ.

What are the choirs and rank of saints, venerated in the Church?

First, the angels, who are sent, not regarding their greatness, to serve those who wish to be saved (*Hebr.* i. 14.), who guard our souls and bodies, and are, therefore, called guardian angels; secondly, the patriarchs, who according to nature were the forefathers of Christ, and because of their virtues types of Him; thirdly, the prophets, who as instruments of the Holy Ghost taught the people the will of God, strengthened them in the true religion, and prepared them for the coming of the Saviour of the world, whom they foretold; fourthly, the apostles, who as witnesses of the divinity of Jesus Christ, as messengers of peace

(hence their name apostle, that is, messenger), are regarded as the fathers and pastors of all the faithful, as the pillars and corner-stones of the Church; fifthly, the evangelists, who brought us the joyous message of the kingdom of God, that is, the doctrines and deeds of Jesus which they saw and heard, and have partially written down and preserved for us; sixthly, the martyrs, who sacrificed their lives for virtue and the Christian religion, and fertilized God's Church with martyr's blood, so that it brought forth an immense number of Christians; seventhly, the bishops and priests, who as good shepherds fed their flock with the blessed Sacraments, with the doctrines of the gospel, with good example, and guarded them from wolves, and by offering the holy Sacrifice of the Mass placed themselves somewhat as mediators between God and man. Eightly, the monks and hermits, who laid aside all earthly honors, joys and wealth, retired into solitude or into monasteries and, so to speak, buried themselves there; ninthly, the confessors, who through all the mockery and persecution of the world, would not permit themselves to be led from the confession and adherence to the evangelical laws; tenthly, the virgins, that is, those who preferred virginal purity above all the pleasures, riches and honors of the world, and never stained it, so that they now follow the Lamb in heaven singing a new canticle, which none other can sing; eleventhly, the widows, who have sanctified their difficult position in life, by humility, patience, industry, proper training of their children, and by resignation to the will of God; twelfthly, the penitents, who having been wrecked in faith, or having lost their innocence, have grasped the plank of penance, rendered satisfaction for their sins, and passed on through the narrow way, through the narrow gate to the heaven.

How should we venerate the patrons of persons, countries, and Churches?

If the Church designates certain patrons for the faithful, she does not wish, that they should be our protectors and intercessors simply, but she demands much more, that they should serve the faithful as models and exemplars. We must, therefore, solicit not only the intercession and protection of our patron-saints, but especially try to make ourselves worthy of them by emulating their virtues.

Is it allowable to venerate the relics of the saints, that is, their bones or other part of them?

Undoubtedly, for this was done even in the Old Law, and how much more in the New; it was the pious custom even in the very earliest times of the Church, and God Himself has, at all times, confirmed this veneration by the greatest miracles. Moses, filled with reverence, took the bones of the Patriarch Joseph and carried them along in the journey to the Promised Land, where they were finally preserved. (*Exod.* viii. 19; *Eccl.* xlix. 18.) Eliseus di-

vided the waters of the Jordan with the mantle of Elias (iv. *Kings* ii. 14.), by touching Eliseus' bones a man came to life. (iv. *Kings* xiii. 21.) Jesus did not rebuke the woman troubled with the issue of blood, who in faith touched the hem of His garment and was healed (*Matt.* ix. 20.), and all kinds of diseases were cured by St. Peter's shadow and by St. Paul' handkerchief. (*Acts* v. 15; xix. 12.) The veneration of the relics of Saints, thus approved by the Holy Scriptures, is also sanctioned by the continual practice of the Church. Even the first Christians regularly visited the graves of the martyrs, there to make prayers and offerings. The bones of St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch and pupil of St. John, were gathered up with the greatest care by the faithful, and as the most precious of treasures were carried on the shoulders of the Christians of all the towns on the road, in a triumphal procession to Antioch. This took place in the year 107 after Christ. In like manner the faithful of Smyrna preserved the bones of St. Polycarp, a bishop, who was martyred by fire in the year 166, preserved them as something more priceless than gold or precious stones in a sacred place, where every year his martyrdom was commemorated. In a sermon on the Saints Juventius and Maximus, St. Chrysostom says: "Let us visit them often, let us touch the little case (in which these bones are kept), and approach their relics with greatest confidence, so that we may receive blessings through them." An immense number of testimonies could still be quoted concerning the veneration of saints' relics, and of the miracles that have occurred through them, by which is clearly shown, that this pious custom has always been practiced in the Church.

Why should we honor the relics of the saints?

The answer to this is finely given by the Council of Trent: "Because they are the precious remains of bodies that were in life members of Christ and temples of the Holy Ghost, and will one day rise and be glorified; they were the instruments of virtue and sanctity; God gives us a great many favors through them, and they, therefore, deserve to be held in honor by us." (*Sess.* 25. *de invoc. et venerat. Reliqu. Sanct.*)

Are we permitted to venerate in the same manner the pictures of the saints, the holy Cross, &c.?

Yes, for the honor we show to the picture, is given to the one whom the picture represents. It would be considered by everybody an insult to a king, if his picture were abused and dishonored. The Council of Trent distinctly declares: "that we must have the pictures of Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and other saints, in the temples especially, retain them there and show them due honor, not as if we believed, there is a God or a power in them to which we must pay honor, if we demand aught from them, or as if we put our trust in the pictures; but because the honor shown them, refers to the original which they represent, so that through the

picture which we kiss and before which we uncover our head and prostrate ourselves, we adore Christ and venerate the saints.

But is not the veneration of pictures forbidden by the prohibition to make a graven image?

No; for God only forbade the adoration of graven images, not their veneration. When God forbade the Jews to make graven images, He wished to prevent them from falling into the superstitions of the neighboring heathens, who really worshipped the images of the sun, stars, men, and animals; but where there was no danger of idolatry, God did not forbid the making of images. Moses himself, by God's order, made the image of two Cherubim, who looked at each other on the ark of the Covenant (*Exod.* xxv. 18.), and he also, as ordered by God, erected a brazen serpent which was for many centuries reverentially preserved (*Num.* xxi. 8.), until the time of Ezechias who destroyed it because of an intimated abuse. (iv. *Kings* xviii. 4.) The walls and doors of Solomon's temple were decorated with many figures and carvings, and God Himself solemnly consecrated this temple. (iii. *Kings* vi. 29.) Consequently, God did not absolutely forbid the use of images or pictures, and we find them in the earliest times of the Church. The old Church Writer Tertullian (about the year 160 A. D.), mentions the picture of the good shepherd on the chalice (*de pudicit. c.* 10.); and pictures of the Blessed Virgin and St. Peter and Paul, the Apostles, dating from the second century, are still in a good state of preservation in the great cemetery of the first Christians at Rome.

But what is the use of pictures?

As St. Gregory says: "They are for the unlearned as a book in which they can study the mysteries and graces of God; that they may take to heart the things which Christ has done for us, and the Saints have done for heaven, and may thus be encouraged to gratitude, to love of God, and to the imitation of the saints. It is most important, that all improper and scandalous pictures, by which innocence is often led astray, be removed out of every Christian dwelling, and sacred and edifying ones put in their place.

What is to be said of the so called miraculous pictures, and pilgrim shrines of the Mother of God, and other saints?

Miraculous pictures and places of pilgrimages of the Mother of God or the saints, are those through which and where God has deigned in a wonderful manner to assist, on account of the intercession of the saints, the faithful who have venerated these pictures, and visited these places in their different needs and troubles. But there is to be remarked concerning these: that the Church permits the faithful to venerate as miraculous only those pictures the truth of whose miracles has been proved beyond all doubt by strict examination; that the Catholic Church does not

believe, these pictures have any force of themselves which produces these miracles, but that God of His own pleasure works His miracles through them; that the Church does teach, that we should not pray for anything to these pictures, or put our trust in them. We invoke Christ Himself or the saints, Christ as God, the saints as friends of God; not their pictures, for in God alone we place all our hopes.

Are we allowed to build Churches, to say Mass, to bring offerings, to make vows, &c., to the pictures and relics of saints?

No; acts of this kind are acts of a veneration which belongs exclusively to God who is Lord over life and death. If such things are performed, it can only be on account of God and His honor, as a thanksgiving for the graces which He has shown to the saints, by which we can keep in view the remembrance and the honor of the saints in whom God has so marvellously manifested Himself, and whom He has so highly honored and does honor. Thus St. Augustine says: "To no martyr, but to God Himself, the Lord of all martyrs, do we build altars and temples, though built on the graves of martyrs. No one of our ministers had ever said on the altar: We offer unto thee, O Peter, or Paul! Whatever is offered, is offered to God who crowns the martyrs." (*Lib.* xx. *cont. Faust. c.* 21.) Thus on certain festivals of saints the Church sings in the Introit: Let us rejoice in the Lord, and celebrate this festival in honor of N. N., over whom the angels rejoice and praise and honor the Son of God. Glory be to the Father, &c.

Can we, in devotion to the saints, do their pictures and relics too much honor, and be led away ourselves?

Undoubtedly; this occurs if we honor them more than God; if, so to speak, we put God aside and address our prayers and devotions to the saints only, placing in them a presumptuous confidence, as if they could and must of themselves assist us; if we promise ourselves from the saints, on account of certain prayers, devotions, and pious exercises, a certainly happy death and heaven, without taking care to lead a pious life; if we ask nothing but temporal goods, money, and riches, &c., from them, and perhaps use to obtain our requests some suspicious and superstitious prayer and devotion, not introduced by the Church, but by the devil and impious men,*) even calling upon the saints to aid in some vicious deed; and when we represent the saints improperly, or in scandalous pictures; if we expose for veneration relics

*) Be careful not to buy or to take printed notes, short prayers or tracts from strangers about whom you know nothing or from those who have no settled faith; these usually contain false doctrines. Therefore you should carry all such papers and tracts to your pastor, asking his advice whether you should use them or not.

that are doubtful and have not been declared authentic by the bishops, or when we do business with them.

Do the unbelievers do right, when they abuse and condemn the veneration of the saints, of their pictures, &c?

If they knew the doctrine of the Church, or would investigate it for themselves, they would not do this, but they usually abuse that which they do not know and do not wish to know. The Catholic Church does not command any of her faithful to venerate the saints, their pictures or relics, but she teaches, that this veneration is good and profitable. The Catholic does not honor the saints as he does God; he does not believe and is not allowed to believe, that there is any power or divinity in the pictures or relics; he does not ask anything from them, but only from Christ and the saints, whom these pictures represent, and puts no confidence, as do the heathens, in pictures, but in God only, by whom the saints, on account of the merits of Christ, will be heard in our behalf.

Is it not false to say, the pope makes men saints?

It is; for it is an insulting calumny, invented to slander the Catholic Church. God only makes men saints; a Catholic can become a saint only through His grace, and through faithful, persevering cooperation with His grace. The pope, as head of the Church, simply declares, that this or that Catholic whom God Himself has pronounced righteous by the miracles He has wrought through him, can be invoked and venerated as a saint. But before the pope publishes any such declaration, a long and strict examination is made into the life of the one who is proposed for canonization.

What is the manner of proceeding in the canonization of a saint?

When a person has died with the reputation of sanctity, and the report has spread about, that God works miracles through him, the bishop of the diocese prepares a statement from the oaths of trustworthy witnesses, which confirms the fame of the person's sanctity and the authenticity of the miracles. This statement is sent to the Congregation of Rites at Rome.*)

The congregation carefully examines it; if it is found to be correct, it is communicated to the pope, who then appoints one of the cardinals of the Congregation commissioner, to procure all the necessary witnesses and explanations for the examination which is now to be instituted into the life of the proposed saint; at the same time some are appointed to oppose the canonization. When this is done, a real jury is composed, that is, cardinals are chosen who solemnly swear, that they will carefully

*) The Congregation of Rites is a meeting of learned cardinals who keep watch and decide on matters concerning the observance of ceremonies and rites in the performance of divine service.

try and judge the person's life, and all witnesses for and against him. Advocates are summoned to this trial, of whom one or more undertake, under oath, the saint's defence, others the accusation, and must bring up every circumstance, even the most trivial, which could cast an unfavorable light on the life of the saint, so that the truth may be more clearly brought out. Physicians, surgeons, and naturalists are called, who must examine the alleged miracles to discover if they are really miracles or only natural occurrences. As soon as this court is impanelled and the trial commenced, the saint receives the title of "Venerable", which is equivalent to saying, he is worthy of beatification. The beatification takes place fifty years after his death. During all this time the trial continues; all his works, conduct and actions are investigated, and the least thing found therein that is contrary to good morals, causes the canonization to fall to the ground. When the examination of the miracles has been completed, the trial is discontinued for ten years in order to bring more witnesses in regard to his character. After ten years the virtues of the saint, his faith, hope, charity, his observance of the four cardinal virtues: fortitude, prudence, temperance, justice, which he must have exercised in the highest degree, are subjected to a strict and searching investigation. For this purpose the pope appoints by a special bull, which is called Letter of Grace, commissioners who must inquire in the places where the person lived, how he practised these virtues. After the examination is concluded, the holy Congregation studies the commissioners' reports, the testimony of the witnesses, &c., and then the trial with all the documents concerning it, has to be submitted to the conscientious inspection and examination of the Consistory, which is composed of all the cardinals, archbishops and bishops of the Roman court. A number of meetings are held, at many of which the pope is present, partly to make personal examination, partly to receive counsel from the bishops. After the pope has done this, often implored God to enlighten him, and even ordered public prayers for the necessary light from heaven, he publishes the bull by which he permits the ceremonies of beatification to take place. As the day approaches on which the solemn beatification is to be made, St. Peter's Church at Rome, the largest and most beautiful in the world, is decorated with all possible splendor; thousands of candles glimmer on all sides of the Church the walls and pillars are draped from top to bottom with the costliest crimson velvet, the high-altar is brilliant with gold and precious stones, and over the altar hangs the veiled picture of the saint whose beatification is about to be commenced. The pope, surrounded by all the cardinals and bishops, appears, attended by all his court, kneels down and once more prays for light. Then the cardinal who is to celebrate High-Mass, comes forward in a golden cope and wearing a mitre, reads in a loud voice the pope's brief, in which it is declared, that the venerable servant of God

whose trial is now at an end, can be venerated and invoked in certain countries and by certain religious orders as one of the saints of God. The Te Deum is then intoned, the veil falls from the picture, and amid the roar of cannon the pope and all the people fall upon their knees, venerating the saint and praising God who has so glorified Himself in him.

This is the solemn act of beatification; the canonization is not yet finished, that is, the declaration that the saint can be venerated by the whole Catholic world. Before this is done, it must be shown, that since the beatification God has worked new miracles through the saint; so there is a new trial and a new examination, and after the performance of new miracles has been clearly proved, the canonization occurs with the same solemnities that were held at the beatification.

From all this it is seen, that no trial could be held with more conscientiousness, more care and severity than the process of beatification and canonization, and that the final judgment is only given when God Himself by the miracles He works through the saint, decides the question, so that not the pope, therefore, but God only can make saints; He simply glorifies His servants who during their whole life sought only His honor and pleasure.

SHORT INSTRUCTION ON PILGRIMAGES.

What is a pilgrimage?

Pilgrimage is a journey voluntarily undertaken to some distant holy place, relics or pictures of some saints, or of the Blessed Virgin, there to pray fervently to receive, through the intercession of the saint, help from God in some corporal or spiritual need.

Are pilgrimages of recent origin?

There were pilgrimages made in the Old Testament, and we find them in the history of all nations. Abraham made a three days' journey in order to perform his sacrifice according to the command of God (*Gen.* xxii. 3.), and the Jews at certain times made pilgrimages to Bethel which place Jacob had sanctified (*Gen.* xxviii. 18.; i. *Kings* x. 3.); in like manner they made in accordance with a command of Moses a pilgrimage, three times a year, to the ark of the Covenant and afterwards to the temple at Jerusalem. (*Deut.* xvi. 16.) And what were these but religious pilgrimages? In the New Testament we read, that the parents of Jesus with their Divine Child, with many other persons, made yearly pilgrimages to Jerusalem (*Luke* ii. 41, 42.), that the apostles and pious women visited the sepulchre of Christ (*Matt.* xxviii.; *Luke* xxiv.),

and that St. Paul, though already a Christian, hastened to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of Pentecost there. (*Acts* xx. 16.) In the history of the Church we find, that it was the custom in the very earliest times of the Church, as it has continued to be to this day, to make pilgrimages to holy places, as to the holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, and to the graves of martyrs.

How should a pilgrimage be made?

In a spirit of true devotion and penance, with sincere and holy intention of paying homage to God through His saints. Therefore, not for pleasure or recreation should we visit holy places. On the way and when at the place, we should avoid all idle talk and sensual excesses; we should gladly endure all the hardships of the journey, the unfavorable weather, the temporary inconvenience of the lodgings, be moderate in eating and drinking, pray fervently and with recollection, confess all our sins contritely and sincerely, reverently receive the blessed Sacrament, fervently thank God for all the graces which He has shown to us, make good resolutions, and preserve and manifest afterwards by a pious life the good impressions which we have received in the pilgrimage. Whoever thus makes it, is sure to derive a real advantage from it.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. ANDREW.

[November 30.]

Ndrew, the brother of Simon Peter, a fisherman, born in Bethsaida by the sea Genesareth and living at Capharnaum, was at first a disciple of John the Baptist who, one day, on the banks of the Jordan when our Saviour was passing by, pointed Him out to Andrew, saying: "Behold the Lamb of God!" Hearing these words, Andrew went at once to Christ, bringing with him his brother Peter. For some time both brothers went regularly to hear Christ without leaving their business as fishermen, until Jesus said to them: Follow me henceforth, and I will make you fishers of men, when they left their trade and remained constantly with Him. After St. Andrew with the other apostles, had been filled with the Holy Ghost, at Pentecost, he travelled through Syria, Epirus, and Greece, everywhere announcing the glad tidings of salvation, and at last suffered a martyr's death at Patras, in Achaia, where he had established his episcopal seat. While he was preaching Christ at Patras, he was urged by the governor Aegeas with violent threatings to offer sacrifice to the idols; but he bravely replied: "I daily offer sacrifice

to the Almighty God, not the flesh of oxen, nor the blood of rams, but an unspotted Lamb; and although all the faithful may have partaken of his flesh, yet the Lamb remains as before he was offered, alive and undivided." The unchangeable hero of the faith was then thrown into prison by command of the enraged governor, who, since he could not force him to deny Christ, condemned him to be cruelly scourged and then crucified. When he was brought out to be crucified, and saw his cross, he cried out: "Hail, precious cross, consecrated by the body of Christ, adorned as with priceless jewels by the limbs of Christ! Well do the faithful know what joyousness lies in thee, and to what glorious reward thou dost lead! O good cross, I have ardently loved thee, long desired and sought thee, and now thou art found by me! thou art made ready for my yearning soul, receive me into thy arms, take me away from men, carry me to thy divine Master, that He who on thee did redeem me, on thee may receive me." Having arrived at the cross, the enraptured apostle disrobed himself, permitted himself to be bound to the cross, where he remained hanging two days, continually preaching faith in Christ, until his soul was raised to Him whom he so ardently desired in the manner of his death to resemble.—If thou wouldst have part in St. Andrew's glory, thou must follow him in his love of the cross.

According to the general opinion, this holy apostle's instrument of torture consisted in two logs slanting across each other, therefore making a slanting cross for the arms.

In the Introit of this day's Mass, the Church says of the apostles: To me thy friends, O God, are made exceedingly honorable; their principality is exceedingly strengthened. Lord, thou hast proved me and known me; thou hast known my sitting down and my rising up. (*Ps.* cxxxviii.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. We humbly beseech Thy divine Majesty, O Lord, that as the blessed Apostle Andrew was a teacher and pastor of Thy Church, so he may be with Thee our perpetual intercessor. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, &c.

EPISTLE. (*Rom.* x. 10—18.) Brethren: With the heart we believe unto justice: but, with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith: Whosoever believeth in him, shall not be confounded. For there is no distinction of the Jew and the Greek: for the same is Lord over all, rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved. How then shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe him, of whom they have not heard?

And how shall they hear, without a preacher? And how shall they preach, unless they be sent? as it is written: How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, of them that bring glad tidings of good things? But all do not obey the gospel. For Isaias saith: Lord, who hath believed our report? Faith then cometh by hearing: and hearing by the word of Christ. But I say: have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the whole world.

EXPLANATION. The apostle here tells us, that it is not sufficient unto salvation that we should believe with the heart, but that we must also openly confess Christ, that is, in words and in deeds, and then only have we the true and living faith in Jesus when we are never ashamed thus to own it. He teaches besides, that God makes no difference between Jew and Greek (that is, gentile), but that every one can be saved who believes in Christ and openly confesses his faith in words and works. But all can believe, since faith comes from hearing, and the word of God through its preachers is everywhere announced. For this reason the Jews are not excusable for their unbelief, nor the infidels among us, for the Church sends forth, at all times into all countries her apostles and preachers of whom it is written: How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, of them that bring glad tidings of good things:— In our days, how much is preached and how little faith is seen! Can such Christians excuse their ignorance, if one day the Lord shall demand an account of their faith?

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* iv. 18—22.) At that time: Jesus walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea (for they were fishers). And he saith to them: Come ye after me, and I will make you to be fishers of men. And they immediately leaving their nets, followed him. And going on from thence, he saw two other brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets: and he called them. And they forthwith left their nets and father, and followed him.

EXPLANATION. Christ chose His apostles to show us that not any one, not called, can assume the place of teacher, but that, as He Himself says, he must be chosen and sent. (*John* xx. 16.) He called His apostles at the very commencement of His teaching, that by continual intercourse with Him, by daily hearing His doc-

trines, and by the sight of His most holy way of life, they might prepare themselves for their great calling.

Christ chose simple fishermen for His apostles, so that, as St. Ambrose says, the world might know, that the introduction of Christianity was the work of God, and no one can say, that Christ won the world to receive the faith by deceit, force, riches, or science.

I will make you fishers of men, that is, I will give you grace to convert souls and bring them to God. — People in the world can and should in their own way be fishers of men. Such they are when they incite their associates, or those under them, to listen attentively to the word of God, give them pious books to read, keep them from bad company, gently reprove their faults, &c. St. Augustine says, that in this way fathers of families exercise the office of bishops.

They immediately followed Christ. We learn from this, that we should at once obey the word of God, when it urges us to do good, or to be converted, and that knowing the truth of the divine call, should put aside all human gains and considerations in order to follow this voice, like the apostles who laid by all temporal profits and followed Jesus, when He called them; for He says: He that loveth father and mother more than me, is not worthy of me. (*Matt.* x. 57.)

PRAYER. Most benign Jesus! who hast elevated simple fishermen to the exalted dignity of apostles, thus putting the wisdom and power of this world to shame, grant, we beseech Thee, that they and their successors may observe Thy teachings, and in faith, hope, and charity remain ever Thine.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER.

[December 3.]

Francis Xavier, called the Apostle of the Indies, was born at the castle Xavier, near Pampeluna, in Spain, April 7, 1506. He was brought up by his parents in the fear of the Lord, and showed, as a child even, a rare talent and inclination to science. In his eighteenth year his parents sent him to the university at Paris, where he soon became one of its most renowned members. He was then in danger of being made proud; but God so arranged it, that he became acquainted with St. Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, who, by often repeating the words of Christ: What will it pro-

fit a man to gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul, taught him indifference to worldly honors, and moved him to finally join the Jesuits. Henceforth he lived only for God, and no other desire so stirred his heart as that of promoting the honor of God, and the salvation of immortal souls. God gave him a special opportunity to fulfil this desire by sending him in the year 1541 as a missionary to India. Sustained by the purest love of God and of his neighbor, he journeyed on foot, enduring unspeakable hardships, through the two large countries of India and Japan, everywhere preaching Christ, the Crucified, converting many hundred thousands to the Christian religion, baptizing them with his own hands, working the most marvellous miracles, even raising some from death to life. Already at the end of his journey, he wished to pass over to the immense country of China there to preach the gospel to the heathens, but on the island of Sancian in sight of that land, he was taken ill; and in the utmost poverty, almost entirely abandoned by his countrymen, he died there on the December 2, 1552, pronouncing the words: In thee, O Lord, have I hoped, let me never be confounded, deliver me in thy justice. (*Ps.* xxx. 2.)

St. Francis is also the patron of the society for the propagation of the faith, which works so beneficially in these our days.

The Introit of the Mass reads: I spoke of thy law in the presence of kings, and I was not ashamed: and meditated on thy commandments, which I loved exceedingly. (*Ps.* cxviii.) Praise the Lord all ye nations: praise him all ye people: for his mercy is confirmed upon us, and the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever. (*Ps.* cxvi.) Glory, &c.

[The Epistle as on the Feast of St. Andrew.]

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who, by the preaching and miracles of blessed Francis, didst bring into Thy Church the people of the Indies: mercifully grant that we may imitate his virtues, whose glorious merits we venerate. Thro'.

[The Gospel as on Ascension Day, verses 15—18.*]*

INSTRUCTION ON THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH.

Go ye into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature. (*Mark.* xvi. 15.)

ALL nations, if they would be saved, must believe in the Catholic doctrine. Christ Himself says this: He that believeth not, shall be condemned (*Mark* xvi. 16.), and the apostle writes: Without faith it is impossible to please God. (*Hebr.* xi. 6.) But if all nations must believe in Christ, then this faith

must be announced to them, for the apostle says: "How shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" (*Rom.* x. 14.) Christ, therefore, commanded His apostles to go into the whole world and to preach the gospel everywhere. This command they obeyed with untiring zeal and heroic love. They carried the doctrine of the cross to remotest lands, ceasing not, even when in bands and chains and under the most cruel tortures, to preach the faith of the Son of God. The apostles died, but zeal to bring the heathens to the acknowledgment of Christ did not die with them. At all times in the Catholic Church, men full of zeal for the salvation of souls have made it the work of their life, to spread the Christian religion among infidels as well as among unbelievers. Who remembers not St. Patrick, the apostle of the Irish, St. Augustine, the apostle of the Saxons, St. Boniface, the apostle of the Germans, St. Rupert, Chilian, Severin, Willibald, Francis Xavier, and hundreds of others? These men were called Messengers of Faith, Missionaries; and even now such missionaries, messengers of faith, go every year into distant and unknown lands, to light the torch of the true faith for all who sit in the darkness of infidelity and the shadow of death. Who can tell the life and work of a missionary? He leaves his parents and fatherland, and placing his trust in God's help alone, he traverses the wide ocean, goes into unknown countries, over the highest mountains, across rivers, inhospitable steppes, through over impenetrable forests, that like the good shepherd he may find the lost sheep and lead them into the fold of Christ, to the true Church; in utter poverty, in hunger and thirst, benumbed with cold, exhausted by heat, exposed to the jaws of wild beasts, still he journeys from one spot to another, for the sake of the heathens often more dangerous than the wild animals, to announce the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. How, armed with the image of the Crucified, he approaches the ferocious savages without trembling, and fearlessly regards the spears, tomahawks, and poisoned arrows, with which they threaten his life; how courageously, for love of Jesus and immortal souls, they die the cruel death of the martyr! And whose heart beats not joyfully and with comfort, when he hears, that this apostle of the Lord has changed fierce cannibals into pious sheep, and that where shortly before robbery, murder and lewdness disgraced human nature, where temples and altars were raised to the devil, there now are seen the days of the earliest Christians: justice and love, innocence, humility and Christian simplicity, blooming heavenly virtues are there, while the sinless Lamb Jesus is offered in the chapels, is adored and loved with ardent devotion! Yet still are the words of Jesus true: The harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few. (*Matt.* ix. 37.) Millions are yet living with no knowledge of the true God, in all the abominable horrors of idolatry; the number of missionaries is too small to preach the gospel everywhere,

and the means insufficient to supply the needs of the poor, unconverted savages. The heretics also send out their messengers, spending immense sums, with but very little effect, however, to spread their errors. What true Catholic heart, thinking of these dangerous circumstances, can look on quietly, while thousands of immortal souls for whom Jesus has shed His blood, are sinking into eternal damnation, because there is none to give them the bread of the word of God, none to enlighten their ignorance with the light of faith, none to point out to them the road to heaven! Do you say, my Christian, "But I cannot be a missionary and announce the gospel to far off lands?" Christ does not require it of you; but you can, at least, aid the immense work of propagating the faith, to by joining one of the societies, founded in 1822 at Lyon, France, called the Missionary Society. Taking to heart the words of Jesus: The harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few; pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest, twelve pious men met together on the third of May, and consulted among themselves, how they could fulfil this wish of Jesus, supply the needs of missions and forward the work of propagating the faith. Taking St. Francis Xavier for their patron, they established a society, all the members of which were to pray for the conversion of the infidels and heathens, and contribute as much to the support of the mission as they could afford, thus taking their part in the apostolic work. The society, so small at first, blessed by God, spread in a short time all over France, and now reaches over almost the whole world. Pope Pius VII. sanctioned the society and granted its members a great many indulgences, which his successors Leo XII., Pius VIII. and Gregory XVI. confirmed, indulgences which can be bestowed upon the suffering souls in purgatory. My Christian, whoever you may be, if you truly love Jesus, your Saviour, if you really are a living member of His body the Church, and rejoice, that you possess the holy, only saving Catholic faith (and who would not rejoice in this?), then can you not possibly remain passive seeing so many thousand souls turned from the tender heart of Jesus and cast into the abyss of eternal perdition by the spirit of error and of lies! You cannot possibly suffer to see your mother, the holy Catholic Church, mourning, because so many whom she would wish to adopt as her children and bring up as citizens of heaven, are yet living apart from her embrace. No, you will not exclude yourself from a society which has put such zeal into the salvation of soul, and which requires of you only a daily devout "Our Father" and "Hail Mary", and a small alms of a few pennies, once a week. Join this society, then, even if you do not possess much, and you will see at the hour of death, how Jesus who says, Whatever you did to these my least brethren, you did to me (*Matt.* xxv. 40.), will repay you.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF THE VIRGIN AND MARTYR ST. BARBARA.

[December 4.]

T. Barbara was the daughter of a wealthy, distinguished and zealous pagan, named Dioscorus, who had her carefully brought up in the city of Nicomedia, where she was born. He wished her to be endowed with superior education and wisdom, and so caused her to be locked up in a tower, the better to keep her mind fixed upon science, and herself preserved from intercourse with the world and the manners of vicious heathens. She was very beautiful, possessed a keen intellect, a very tender, susceptible spirit. The solitude of the tower caused her to think over herself and her creation. From the windows of the tower she contemplated the starlit heavens in all their brilliancy, the fields, the hills, the forests in their loveliness, and it became evident to her, that all this could not be the work of man or of imaginary idols, but that a most superior Being must have made heaven and earth; from this arose the most fervent desire for the knowledge of the true God, and God who saw her desire, wished to gratify it. But how Barbara came to the knowledge of Christ and His holy doctrine, is unknown; it filled her with sweet consolation and childlike delight. From henceforth she despised the veneration of idols, and felt herself from day to day drawn more intimately to Jesus, the more she learned of the treasures hidden in Him, and, for this reason, refused all offers for her hand, preferring to remain always a virgin. This appeared to her father, indeed, a strange conduct, but he counted it as a woman's caprice, fancying his daughter would before long be of a different opinion. But he was mistaken. One day, returning from a journey, he perceived, that his daughter had constructed three windows and a cross in her bath-room; greatly surprised, he asked the reason and received for answer: "I have done this, that I might have ever present before me the doctrine of the most holy Trinity whom the Christians confess, and the grace of salvation through Jesus Christ, the Son of God," and then, with great enthusiasm, Barbara began to speak of the glory of Christianity and the abomination of idolatry, so that her father was almost rendered mute by surprise and anger. At last, he so far recovered his powers, that in rage he drew his sword to slay her on the spot, but she escaped him and thus saved him from the shame of being the murderer of his own daughter. But he pursued her and found her hidden in the shrubbery, dragged her by her hair to the house, and abused her most cruelly as a means of altering her views; but Barbara had received her strength from her divine bridegroom

and she remained constant to her faith in Christ. The rage of the maddened father knew no bounds. He hastened to the governor Martian, and himself accused his daughter as a scorner of the gods. The governor caused her to be brought to his tribunal, seeking at first by flattery to lure her from the faith, but as this availed nothing, he had her scourged with cowhides. Barbara suffered patiently, persevering firmly and unalterably in her love for Jesus who had appeared to her in prison, consoled her and healed her wounds. She was again brought before the tribunal, declared with fresh courage, that she belonged to Christ and would never permit herself to be parted from Him. She was then burnt with torches, was made to disrobe and was thus led through the streets of the city; but even this agony and shame she endured for the sake of Christ, the Crucified, even thanked God for it. She was then ordered to be beheaded. At the place of execution her father suddenly appeared by her side, and overpowered by fiendish rage, with one stroke of his sword severed her head from the body. Because of this fierce crime, he was soon after struck and killed by lightning, but the holy virgin Barbara was soon after her death venerated in Christendom as a glorious martyr of Jesus, and is especially venerated and invoked as patroness of the dying, since a great number of persons have by her intercession been most wonderfully provided with the last Sacraments.

The Introit, Epistle, and Gospel of this day, are the same that are said on the Feast of St. Catherine.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who amongst Thy other miracles hast bestowed the crown of martyrdom even upon the weaker sex, mercifully grant, we beseech Thee, that we who solemnize the festival of the blessed Barbara, Thy virgin and martyr, may by following her example come to Thee. Through Christ, our Lord, &c.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. NICHOLAS, BISHOP.

[December 6.]

T. Nicholas, this great servant of God, whom St. Peter Damian calls the one chosen of God from his mother's bosom, the ward of sanctity in childhood, the beauty of the young men, the honor of the old, the splendor of the priests, and the light of the bishops, was born at Patara in Lycia in 280, or rather was then presented by God, in answer to their prayers, to his pious childless parents. Even as an infant he would abstain on Wednesdays and Fridays (the fastdays of that time)

from his mother's milk, and during his whole life continued to fast on these days. He passed through his childhood free from all levity, and in such innocence and piety, that he could serve every one as a pattern of sanctity. The early death of his parents left him the heir to great wealth, which he distributed to the poor, that is, to those who were ashamed to beg, and gave the most to those whose poverty most endangered their salvation. This is illustrated in the following story: A certain man of noble birth had three daughters, but his poverty did not permit him to give them in marriage, and to obtain money he was willing to expose them to a life of infamy. St. Nicholas had scarcely heard of this, then he went in the stillness of night, and threw money enough into the nobleman's house to suffice for a dowry for one of his daughters. This he twice repeated, and the three maidens were married to three virtuous men. So brilliant a light of virtue was well worthy of being placed in an elevated setting. The bishop's seat at Myra was vacant, and God revealed to the priests assembled for the election, that that one was to be made bishop who the next morning would be the first in Church. This proved to be Nicholas who, notwithstanding his refusal to accept, was consecrated bishop. But the elevated position which he accepted only from obedience to God, but made him the more humble, charitable, and perfect in all virtue. God honored him with the gift of miracles, so that he was called the man of miracles, and to test his patience, permitted him to be persecuted for his faith; he was exiled, was put in chains and thrown into prison, until the Church received peace. Then he attacked with all energy the heresy of Arius who denied, that Christ is God, and, at last, exhausted by his untiring labors for the salvation of souls and adorned with the light of the most beautiful virtues, he died in 327, after a short and not severe illness, saying the words: "Lord, my soul has hoped in Thee; receive it into Thy hands!" In the year 1087 his relics were brought by some merchants to Bari, in the kingdom of Naples, and were honored by the Lord by the most conspicuous miracles. St. Nicholas is generally represented in the robes of a bishop, with mitre and crosier, a Bible and three golden apples in his left hand. The Bible is to signify his zeal to keep the doctrines of Christ unstained, and the three golden apples the three maidens whom he rescued from infamy, as well as the many works of mercy he performed up to the time of his death.

The Introit of the Mass reads: The Lord made to him a covenant of peace and made him a prince, that the dignity of priesthood should be to him forever. O Lord, remember David and all his meekness. (*Ps.* cxxxi.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who by innumerable miracles hast honoured blessed Nicholas the Bishop:

grant, we beseech Thee, that by his merits and intercession we may be delivered from eternal flames. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Hebr.* xiii. 7—17.) BRETHREN: Remember your prelates who have spoken the word of God to you: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ yesterday and to-day: and the same for ever. Be not led away with various and strange doctrines. For it is best that the heart be established with grace, not with meats: which have not profited those that walk in them. We have an altar, whereof they have no power to eat who serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the Holies by the high-priest for sin are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people by his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore to him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For we have not here a lasting city, but we seek one that is to come. By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise always to God, that is to say, the fruit of lips confessing to his name. And do not forget to do good and to impart; for by such sacrifices God's favour is obtained. Obey your prelates, and be subject to them. For they watch, as being to render an account of your souls.

EXPLANATION. The apostle here admonishes the Hebrews, that is, Jews, who although converted to Christianity, had still the idea, that Judaism must be connected with Christianity, that they must honor their spiritual directors, and imitate their virtues, their living faith, which led them to a blessed and glorious end. He exhorts them to keep watch against strange and false doctrines, for Christ, that is, His doctrine, remains unchanged. He teaches them especially not to think too much of sacrifices and different sorts of food, which were ordered by the Jewish law, for these cannot strengthen the heart, cannot justify and sanctify us, this can be done only by the grace of the gospel: the use of the Sacraments, the blessed Sacrament of the Altar. Of this, indeed, the Jews who serve the tabernacle, that is, those who observe the Old Law, are not allowed to partake, because the Law forbids them also to partake of the annual propitiatory sacrifice which was burnt outside the gates of the city of Jerusalem. This propitiatory sacrifice was a type of Jesus who, laden with ignominy by the Jews, also sacrificed Himself outside the gates of the city on the cross. If, therefore, they wish to have part in the sacrifice of Jesus, and partake of it, they must leave the camp, that is, give up the Old Law, cling with a strong faith

to Jesus, and bear with the reproach cast on Him. If they suffer with Him, it lasts not long, for we are here without an abiding place, seeking heaven. Through Christ, that is, by acknowledging Him as the real Redeemer, they should at all times bring to God the sacrifice of praise and connect this sacrifice with deeds of mercy which are especially agreeable to God. They should faithfully obey their superiors, or pastors, because these pastors are concerned for their soul's salvation and are accountable for them.

As the Jews had no share in the sacrifice of Christ, because they kept to the Old Law, so also you will have no share in it, so long as you keep with the world. Fly from the world and keep with Christ, as so often exhorted by the spiritual superiors to whom you owe faithful obedience.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxv. 14—23.) At that time: Jesus spoke this parable to his disciples: A man going into a far country, called his servants, and delivered to them his goods. And to one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one, to every one according to his proper ability: and immediately he took his journey. And he that had received the five talents went his way and traded with the same, and gained other five. And in like manner he that had received the two, gained other two. But he that had received the one, going his way digged into the earth, and hid his lord's money. But after a long time the lord of those servants came, and reckoned with them. And he that had received the five talents coming, brought other five talents, saying: Lord, thou didst deliver to me five talents: behold, I have gained other five over and above. His lord said to him: Well done, good and faithful servant, because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. And he also that had received the two talents came and said: Lord, thou deliveredst two talents to me: behold, I have gained other two. His lord said to him: Well done, good and faithful servant, because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Who is he who went into a far country?

This is Christ who by His ascension into heaven, has gone away from earth, and will come again at the judgment.

What is to be understood by the talents?

A talent in our money amounts to about four thousand dollars; but here the talents are a figure of the threefold gifts of God. In the first part are the gifts of nature: a keen intellect, a ready wit, a good memory, science and skill, as also health, strength, and beauty; the second part comprises the gifts of grace, that is, inward inspiration and enlightenment, faith, hope, charity, and other virtues; the third the gift of miracles, the apostolate and pastorship, the power of discerning spirits, of prophecy, of healing, of tongues, &c.

How does God distribute these talents?

God distributes His gifts variously, by virtue of His unlimited power, as Lord of all. To one He gives much, to another little. If one receives much, he must not become prodigal, if little, not fainthearted, but work with that which he has received, according to his ability, for the honor of God, the good of his neighbor, and the salvation of his own soul. More than this God does not require, but He certainly exacts more from him who has received much than from him who has received little.

Who are meant by those who with five talents gained five, and with two talents gained two?

Those who have worked scrupulously with the gifts which God has given them. They deserve equal praise, and are received with equal joy by the householder, and equally rewarded for their fidelity. God does not judge by the extent of the merits, but his merciful eye regards our good will, obedience, diligence, and the obstacles under which we labored.

Who are understood by the servant who buried his talent in the earth?

Those who, whether of high or humble position, make no use of God's gifts, and will, therefore, be deprived of them at the Last Day and cast into hell.

Why says the Lord: Enter then into the joy of thy Lord?

Because God rejoices at man's salvation, and because His faithful servants will find eternal joy in beholding and possessing Him in heaven.

PRAYER. I thank Thee, my divine Saviour, for all the gifts and graces which Thou hast given me, and I am grieved from my heart, that I have so illused and neglected them. Be merciful to me, and give me the grace to use my talents, as did St. Nicholas, with all energy for Thy honor and my own salvation, so that Thou mayest say to me on the Day of Judgment: Well done, good and faithful servant, be-

cause thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

[December 8.]

N this day and the ensuing eight days, the Catholic Church celebrates with special solemnity the happy, immaculate conception of the blessed Virgin Mary.

What does the Catholic Church understand by immaculate conception?

By immaculate conception she does not understand that great grace by which Mary preserved herself pure from every, even the least, actual sin; for, as concerns this, the Church has long since declared, that Mary never committed a sin; nor does she understand by it her continual virginity, for that, both before and after the birth of her divine Son, Mary remained a pure virgin, has been for a long time a doctrine of faith; nor yet that she was sanctified before birth, as were the Prophet Jeremias and John, the Baptist, who were both conceived in sin, but by a special grace of God were released from it before their birth; neither does she understand by it the conception of Christ from the Holy Ghost, that is, that Mary unstained conceived the Son of God by the Holy Ghost, and without the assistance of man, for this was always the unalterable doctrine of the Church; she does understand by it that exalted preference, that unshared privilege, by which the blessed Virgin Mary in the first moments of her conception by special grace and preference on the part of God in reference to the merits of Jesus, our Saviour, was preserved from every stain of original sin.

What has until now been held by the Church in regard to this privilege?

The Catholic Church has always been of the pious opinion, that Mary, the blessed Mother of the Redeemer, was conceived immaculate without the stain of sin, that her most pure soul had never from the first moment of her existence the least shadow of sin. This devout view was embraced by all the saints, the most learned and most faithful children of the Church. We have testimony of this which goes back to the times of the apostles, in a

writing concerning the sufferings of St. Andrew, in which it is said: "As the first man was created from the spotless earth, so was it necessary, that the perfect man (Christ Jesus) should be born of an immaculate virgin." St. Justin, who died a martyr in the year 167 after Christ, compares the blessed Virgin with Eve, before she sinned and while she was still a virgin. St. Amphilochus says: "He who created the first Eve free from shame, created the second without spot or stain." Origen, one of the fathers of the Church, writes, that she was neither surprised by the personated serpent, nor infected by his poison, and calls her a pure and immaculate mother. St. Ephrem calls her the undefiled, the strong, the inviolate, the most chaste virgin, far removed from all spot and stain. The Abbot St. Sabbas says of Mary: "On thee who never took part in any guile, I place my hope. No one but

thee, O Lady, is without fault, and besides thee no one is unsullied and spotless." St. Ambrose calls Mary a virgin who by the grace of God remained always free from all shadow of sin. St. Augustine says: "When there is mention made of sin, the Virgin of whom on account of our Lord no question is to be asked, must be excepted." St. Proclus says, "that the holy Mother of God was made by the purest God free from all stain." St. Fulgentius says: "The wife of the first man was led astray and her soul soiled by the malice of sin, but in the mother of the second (Christ) the grace of God preserved the soul as well as the body inviolate." St. Pasch. Radbertus testifies: "It is certain, that Mary was free from original sin;" and St. Peter Damian says: "The flesh of the Virgin taken from Adam, would not submit to the stain of Adam," and before him the pious Doctor Alkuin writes of Mary: "Thou art beautiful as the moon and free from all spot and every shadow of changeableness!" And St. Ildephonsus says: "It is certain, that Mary was free from original sin." An immense number of saintly men and theologians maintained the same. Many of them argued with the greatest keenness and the most indefatigable zeal the part of the blessed Virgin; the teachers at the universities of Paris, Salamanca, Coimbra, Naples, Cologne, Mayence, Ingolstadt, &c., made it by vows their duty to inculcate this great privilege of the most favored Virgin, and to defend it by speech and by writings. Celebrated orders of monks, especially the orders of St. Francis and St. Ignatius, made it their duty to advance among the people this pious faith of the immaculate conception. A great number of popes and bishops also honored the immaculate conception and forbade the contrary doctrine to be taught. Even kings, princes, and emperors counted it their great honor to pay homage to the immaculate conception of the Queen of Heaven. At last the Catholic Church gave definite expression to this universally held belief, by declaring in the Council of Trent, that in the resolutions relating to original sin, the Virgin Mary was not included, and confirmed the festival of the immaculate conception, introduced by St. Anselm in the tenth century, and since that time observed in all the Churches.

Still, this glowing veneration of all Catholic hearts for the immaculate conception, this pious view held by the whole Catholic Church, was not yet a matter of faith, that is, the Catholic Church had not yet laid down this great privilege of the Mother of God as a dogma and commanded us to believe it. It was still permitted to us doubt this point, without being branded as heretics, although it was forbidden to teach or preach against it. But when, in the course of time, a large number of faithful, among them bishops and archbishops, whole religious orders as well as great monarchs, besought the pope verbally and in writing, to pronounce himself publicly concerning the immaculate conception of the blessed Virgin, that is, to elevate the belief so widely spread through-

out the Catholic Church to a dogma, the pope could no longer hesitate to raise his voice in regard to this most important affair.

What did the supreme pastor of the Church, the pope, then do in regard to the immaculate conception of the blessed Virgin?

The present Pope Pius IX., who, as he himself testifies, has in many ways experienced the assistance of the great Queen of Heaven, was urged by his love and childlike veneration for the blessed Mother of our Lord, to set the last brilliant diamond in her crown of glory, and give the so heartily desired judgment concerning the immaculate conception, but he did not wish to be precipitate. He first addressed, on the 2. Februar 1849, a circular to all the primates, patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops of the whole Catholic world, requesting them to send him reports of the devotion of their clergy and the faithful concerning the immaculate conception, and the extent of their desire in the matter, that the case might be decided by the Apostolic See; at the same time he urged them to pray with him, that God would give him the necessary enlightenment, and to call upon the clergy and the faithful for their prayers. When this was done, five hundred bishops in different parts of the world declared, that they and their flocks firmly believed that Mary, the most favored Virgin, was preserved from every stain of original sin, and that they earnestly desired that the pope might raise this pious opinion to a dogma of the Church. Then the holy father, full of delight, invited the bishops of the different countries to come to Rome, and gather around and consult with him. About one hundred and fifty bishops, and a large number of learned men and superiors of spiritual orders, came together at Rome, and the whole subject was once more maturely examined; and, at last, in 1854, the eighth of December, the day on which the Church celebrates the feast of the immaculate conception, was appointed as the day, on which the pope, the supreme head of the Church, the mouth of the apostles, should solemnly announce the dogma of the immaculate conception.

On this day the holy father ascended the Apostolic Chair in the splendid Church of St. Peter at Rome, and, having again invoked the light of the Holy Ghost, surrounded by the assembled cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, the clergy and the people, he opened his lips and amid the perfect silence which reigned in that immense Church, in a loud voice and with the most profound reverence and emotion read the decree by which he solemnly pronounced and established, that:

"It is a dogma of faith, that the blessed Virgin Mary by a special grace and privilege of God, on account of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of mankind, was from the first instant of her conception protected and preserved from every stain of original sin."

Thus has the head of Catholic Christianity drawn aside the veil which until now obscured the full glory of the Queen of Heaven, that now in stainless loveliness shines radiant over the whole world. The truth, that the blessed Virgin Mary was conceived immaculate, is no longer a pious opinion, but an article of faith which every Catholic who wishes to remain a child of the Church, must profess with heart and with lips.

But, perhaps, the decision of the pope concerning the immaculate conception is a new doctrine?

By no means; it is an old belief, established upon the holy Scriptures, and laid down in the bosom of the Church, but not previously solemnly pronounced and made public. The pope cannot make a new article of faith, but he can and must announce that as a revealed truth, which is established by the holy Scriptures and has been everywhere and at all times believed as a revealed truth by all true Christians. But if there is a truth founded on the holy Scriptures and tradition, of which the pope, the representative of Christ on earth, speaks officially as such, then every Catholic is bound to believe and openly to acknowledge it. As we have already seen, the doctrine of the immaculate conception has been believed since the times of the apostles, and it is also established by the holy Scriptures. In the oldest of the sacred Books in the Book of Genesis (iii. 15.), is one of the most weighty passages on this subject which reads: I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel. These words God Himself spoke to Satan, the serpent, immediately after the fall of the first man, announcing that a woman should come and crush his head, that is, destroy his power; and all Catholic interpreters and holy fathers agree, that this woman is the blessed Virgin. Mary is, therefore, placed by God Himself as Satan's enemy, and must have been free from original sin from the first moment of her conception, otherwise she would have been, as St. Paul, the Apostle, says, a child of God's wrath and been under the power of Satan. In the gospel of St. Luke (i.27.), it is furthermore said: And the angel being come in, said to her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou amongst women. The angel, by the direction of God, called Mary: full of grace, that is, more than any of the just endowed with God's sanctifying grace, as the holy fathers agree. But would Mary be full of sanctifying and all other graces, had she once for one moment of her life been without grace and burdened with sin? Would God have permitted, that the blessed Mother of His only begotten Son, from whom He received flesh and under whose heart He rested, should be once touched by sin, once, though but for an instant, in the power of Satan? No; God's hand preserved her; by His grace and by the

infinite merits of her divine Son, she remained free from every stain of sin, and the Church most justly applies to her the words of the holy Scripture: Thou art all fair, O my love, and there is not a spot in thee. (*Cant.* iv. 7.)

What instructive meaning has the immaculate conception of the blessed Virgin for every Catholic?

The immaculate conception teaches Catholics to know in some measure the infinite holiness of the Trinity of God, which makes sin so hateful and detestable to Him. The Heavenly Father could not see His beloved daughter for one moment stained by sin. The Divine Son could not wish to choose for His mother a virgin upon whose soul there was a vestige of sin. The Holy Ghost whose most pure bride Mary is, was not willing, that Mary's heart, His dwelling place, should ever be for one instant soiled by sin. Behold, how God detests sin! The immaculate conception also teaches us the inestimable treasure of sanctifying grace. Mary received this priceless treasure from God even in the first moment of her conception, without it she would never have become the Mother of the Saviour. And thou, my Christian, hadst this treasure not at thy conception, it is true, but thou didst receive it in holy Baptism; there God's hand arrayed thee in the snow-white garment of innocence; there He sanctified thy soul, and the Holy Ghost selected it for His dwelling place. Mary preserved this inestimable treasure until death, she was always blooming as a pure lily, the breath of sin never soiled her loveliness. Ask thyself: Do I still possess entire this treasure which was given to me in holy Baptism; have I preserved my soul's beauty from the poison of sin, have I soiled it, destroyed it, lost it? O, if thou hast lost it, this precious gift, how unhappy then art thou! If thou hast had this great misfortune, by sin to have stained thy garment of baptismal innocence, have lost the sanctifying vesture: for thee, Mary, the peerless Virgin, has borne the Saviour whose sacred blood cleanses from every sin, whose infinite merits, if thou art contrite and dost confess thy sin, will restore to thee the sanctifying grace. But for the Saviour this treasure would be forever lost to thee, and thy soul forever lost. But for this Saviour Mary would not have been preserved from original sin, would not have received the sanctifying grace at her conception. Here can the necessity of salvation by Christ be learned, gratefully thanking God who has given us such, and praising Mary who had the grace to receive and give birth to Him. In the immaculate conception, O Christian, thou canst learn to know somewhat of the priceless value of virginity. Jesus chose a pure and immaculate virgin for His mother, who should be the mirror of all virginal souls, her most pure and immaculate image should be continually presented to the corrupted world to show, how above all price is virginity in the eyes of the Lord.

Introit of the Mass: I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, and my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garment of salvation, and with the robes of justice he hath covered me, as a bridegroom decked with a crown, and as a bride adorned with her jewels. (*Ps.* lxx.) I will extol thee, O Lord, for thou hast upheld me, and hast not made my enemies to rejoice over me. (*Ps.* xxix.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who by the immaculate conception of the blessed Virgin didst prepare a worthy dwelling for Thy Son, grant, we beseech Thee, that Thou who because of the foreseen death of Thy Son didst preserve her from all stain, wouldst permit us by her intercession to come to Thee free from sin. Amen.

LESSON. (*Prov.* viii. 22—25.) The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, before he made any thing, from the beginning. I was set up from eternity, and of old before the earth was made. The depths were not as yet, and I was already conceived, neither had the fountains of waters as yet sprung out: the mountains with their huge bulk had not as yet been established: before the hills I was brought forth: he had not yet made the earth, nor the rivers, nor the poles of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when with a certain law and compass he enclosed the depths: when he established the sky above, and poised the fountains of waters: when he compassed the sea with its bounds, and set a law to the waters, that they should not pass their limits: when he balanced the foundation of the earth, I was with him forming all things, and was delighted every day, playing before him at all times, playing in the world: and my delight is to be with the children of men. Now, therefore, ye children, hear me, blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, and that watcheth daily at my gates, and waiteth at the posts of my doors. He that shall find me, shall find life, and shall have salvation from the Lord.

EXPLANATION and APPLICATION. This lesson is first a panegyrick on the divine, uncreated Wisdom, the eternal Son of God, who at all times and before all things was with God and in God, by whom was made everything that was made, ordered and

preserved; who rejoices in His works, loves them, and who admonishes man to love and imitate Him, and promises to him temporal and eternal happiness. The Church causes this lesson to be read on this day, because the greater part of it can be applied to Mary; for of Mary it can be truly said, that she also possessed the first place in the heart of God beyond all creatures, as the most holy and excellent of creatures. For this reason the Church also applies to her the words of the wise man: I came out of the mouth of the Most High, the first born before all creatures. (*Eccl.* xxiv. 5.) For she, as St. Richardus says, is the most worthy of all; no one has received so full a measure of purity and of all supernatural gifts; in no creature are the marvels of divine goodness so visible as in her. Admire, devout soul, this masterpiece of Almighty God, and make frequent use of the words of St. Chrysostom:

"Hail, Mother of God and our Mother! Hail, O Heaven in which God Himself dwells! O Throne of grace from which the Lord distributes His graces! Pray always to Jesus for us, that on the Day of Judgment we may receive forgiveness and eternal salvation."

GOSPEL. (*Luke* i. 26—28.) At that time: The angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel being come in, said unto her: Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women.

Why is the gospel of the angel's message and greeting read in the Mass of this day?

Because the words of this gospel have a significant relation to the immaculate conception and indescribably great honor of the blessed Virgin, as shown by the words: Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women.

Why did the angel call Mary full of grace?

Because Mary was filled with grace, even before she came into this world; because she always increased in grace; because she was to bear the Author of all grace; that we may consider how Mary obtains for us the treasures of divine grace.

Mary was filled with grace even before her birth. As we are all conceived in sin, as children of a sinful ancestor, we are, therefore, afflicted with sin before our birth. Mary was free by the privilege of the immaculate conception from all sin; her soul,

pure and adorned with sanctifying grace, came forth from the hands of the creator, and without the least prejudice to its purity and sanctity was united to her most pure body, from which the Saviour was to take His humanity. She could not have lacked from the first instant of her existence that original sanctity and justice, which were the most beautiful adornments of our natural ancestress, Eve.

But Mary from the first moment of her conception was not only in grace but full of grace, because God appointed her for the highest dignity, for the dignity of being the Mother of His only begotten Son, and had consequently presented her with the full measure of corresponding plenitude of graces and gifts of the Holy Ghost; according to the opinion of many learned men, the measure of grace which the blessed Virgin received at her immaculate conception, was greater than that which all the angels and blessed now in glory possess.

Mary ever increased in grace: But the path of the just, as a shining light, goeth forward and increaseth even to perfect day. (*Prov.* iv. 18.) The life of the blessed Virgin especially confirms the words inspired by the holy Ghost, who, having already at her conception shed the fulness of His graces upon Mary, did not cease to shower the treasures of His goodness upon her, in order to prepare her to be a worthy dwelling of the divine Son. But what abundance of grace did she not receive, when the Holy Ghost overshadowed her, and the divine Son, who is Himself the infinite plenitude of grace, came into her most pure body! Above all this, there yet came that rich supply of grace by which her zealous, constant, perfect and faithful cooperation made Mary increase every moment in grace and filled her measure of grace. Thus St. Bonaventura says: "As all the waters meet in the sea, so all the graces were united in Mary."

Mary has borne the Author of all grace, Jesus Christ. In Jesus all the treasures and riches of grace are contained, and assuredly His most blessed Mother received the richest, overflowing measure of His abundance, not for herself only, but for us. "Mary," says St. Thomas of Aquinas, "is not full of grace for herself only, but for all. Every saint has, it is true, received grace by which to assist some men; but Mary received so many, that she could cooperate in the salvation of the whole world, which after Jesus Christ she only could do." "With what sentiments of devotion should we not venerate Mary," says St. Bernard, "since the Most High has bestowed the fulness of all good upon her, while we know, that, if there exist any hope, if there be any grace, if there be any salvation, it flows from her to us!"

Why did the angel say to Mary: The Lord is with thee?

Because God is with the blessed Virgin in an extraordinary manner. It is well particularly to notice, that the archangel

Gabriel did not say to Mary as the angel did to Gideon: The Lord be with thee (*Judges* vi. 12.), but: The Lord **is** with thee. These words are not, therefore, the wish that the favor, the blessing, the protection of God may be with Mary, but the positive declaration that the Lord really is with Mary, not simply because of His omnipotence and omnipresence by which He is with all His creatures, nor merely because of His goodness, love and intimacy by which He is with all the just. He is with her in a peculiar manner, since she by her dignity of being the Mother of God came into such close relationship with the Triune God, that our intellect can conceive nothing nearer. She became the chosen Mother of the Son of God, the dearest, the most favored daughter of the Heavenly Father, and the pure, beloved bride of the Holy Ghost. "God the Father was with her," here says St. Bonaventura, "as with His most noble daughter; God the Son was with her as with His worthy Mother; God the Holy Ghost was with her as with His most pure bride."

Why did the angel say to Mary: Blessed art thou amongst women?

Because he desired to honor her as the most Blessed of her sex. She is the most Blessed of her sex, because she alone was selected among all for the Maiden-Mother of God; because the first woman brought the curse, but Mary the salvation of the world.

Mary: Mother of God! An honor, indeed, which in its exaltation is second only to divinity. As the divinity itself so the honor of being the Mother of God, exceeds every thing which we are able to say or think of it. Mary: the Virgin Mother of God! Mother and Virgin at the same time, what a wonderful prerogative! Though the greatest and most glorious of all mothers, she is the purest and most spotless of virgins, the queen of virgins!

But not only on account of her double glory as Mother of God and as a Virgin, Mary is the most Blessed of her sex, but because it was given to her to mediate for us and for the whole world. She is that woman, promised to our first and sinful parents in Paradise, who would crush the serpent's head; she gave to her Son the body with which He by His death on the cross, accomplished the great work of salvation.

EULOGY. "Praised and blessed be the holy and immaculate conception of the blessed Virgin Mary!"

[Pope Pius VI. granted an indulgence of one hundred days to those who with contrition and devotion repeat the above prayer.]

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. THOMAS, THE APOSTLE.

[December 21.]

Homas, otherwise called Didymus (twin), was a Galilean and a fisherman. Having been received by Christ as one of the apostles, he accompanied our divine Saviour on all His journeys, shunning no danger. His courage and faithful adherence to his divine Master, were especially manifested at the time that our Lord went to Bethania to raise Lazarus to life, when the disciples were afraid to accompany Him, because the Jews sought His life. "Let us go with Him," Thomas said to the other disciples, "that we may die with Him." His belief in Christ's resurrection staggered, but scarcely had Christ convinced him by showing His wounds, than he cried out at once, strong in faith: My Lord and my God! thus acknowledging the Saviour not only as man, as he saw with his eyes, but as God whom he could not see. St. Gregory says on this subject: "God permitted St. Thomas' doubts for our good; and his unbelief is of more advantage to us than the ready faith of the other disciples, for he induced Christ to give us clearer proofs of His resurrection, thus strengthening our faith in it." After he had received the Holy Ghost, at Pentecost, and for some time preached the gospel in Judea, St. Thomas at the dispersion of the apostles went to the Eastern nations: to the Persians, Medes, Armenians, Hyrcanians, Bactrians, and according to later reports the doctrine of Jesus was heard from his lips in India and China. What trials, hardships and persecutions must he have suffered on these long journeys among unbelievers! According to the Roman Martyrology he died the death of martyr, being pierced with lances at Calamnia, now called Meliapor, a city of India.

For three years Thomas had associated continually with Jesus, seen His miracles, and heard His doctrine, especially the doctrine of His resurrection, which He had often plainly foretold; and yet he doubted and found it hard to accept this truth. Whence came this? We find no other explanation than human weakness, or perhaps a little failing, occasioned perhaps by the intemperate sorrow at the death of Jesus, which caused Thomas to separate himself from the other apostles, who with Mary, the mother of the faithful, were assembled together, occupied in prayer and pious conversation, and thus to lose Christ's first appearance. If Thomas was in this manner shaken in his faith, how will it be with those Christians who hate all spiritual exercises, prayers, and edifying reading, on the contrary associate only with free-thinkers and ridiculers of the Church, and read irreligious books?

[For the Introit of Mass see the Feast of St. Andrew.]

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, O Lord, we beseech Thee, that we may rejoice on the solemnity of Thy blessed Apostle Thomas; to the end that we may always have the assistance of his prayers, and zealously profess the faith he taught.

EPISTLE. (*Ephes.* ii. 19—22.) BRETHREN: You are no more strangers and foreigners: but you are fellow-citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone: in whom all the building being framed together, groweth up into a holy temple in the Lord. In whom you also are built together into an habitation of God in the spirit.

EXPLANATION. The apostle here says to the Ephesians and to all baptized Christians: Now that you are baptized, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, that is, without the rights of a citizen, as before when you were yet gentiles; you are now by baptism fellow-citizens with the saints, and belong now to the large family of God, to the Church, have, therefore, part in its riches, and are heirs of heaven. The Church to which you belong, is firmly founded on the teachings and faith of the prophets and apostles, having for their corner-stone Christ, who unites you with Him, who holds the entire building together, and causes the Church to spread itself ever more and more, receiving ever more and more faithful within it, whom He by His grace purifies and sanctifies; and thus there stands a holy spiritual temple, the corner-stone of which is Christ, its foundation the apostles, its spiritual stones the living Christians, among whom are you, and those who live only in and for Christ, the Lord. What a happiness is yours, that you by baptism have been brought into this temple as a living stone in its walls! But if you do not preserve the living faith in Christ, if you live not in accordance with His doctrine, then will you be taken away and to your greatest misfortune cast out as unfit for this temple, the Church.

[See Gospel and Explanation for first Sunday after Easter.]

PRACTICAL INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING FAITH AND SUPERSTITION.

THE just man, says St. Paul, liveth by faith (*Rom.* i. 17.), that is, as a farmer lives by his labor, an artist by his art, receiving his food and support from it, so the true Christian finds the life, health and strength of his soul in his faith. And as material life shows itself by certain external acts and signs, so the

spiritual life shows itself by actions dictated by faith: he, who possesses this spiritual life prays fervently, gives alms according to his means, exercises himself in all charitable deeds towards his neighbor, fasts and lives strictly, walks in the presence of God, avoiding every sin, and he performs all because he is animated by a lively faith which teaches him, that God is a just judge, the severe punisher of all evil, the liberal rewarder of all good, who Himself has said, that heaven must be forced, and only those who use force, can gain it. An indifferent Christian, on the other hand, who has only a dead faith, does of all that it requires, nothing; but sets his heart on temporal things, seeks only the happiness of this world, and to gain it, does not avoid even superstitious means. Superstition, generally, consists in venerating God in a manner which is not pleasing to Him, in ascribing to things a supernatural value which from God and His Church they have not, and in even seeking aid from evil spirits. It is, therefore, superstition to apply to vain, even sinful purposes that which is instituted by Christ and His Church for the salvation of souls. There are people so blind, that they fancy that in searching for a concealed treasure, nothing is necessary for success but the saying of Mass by a priest at midnight; who imagine by the repetition of certain prayers to have luck in a lottery; or that by diligently saying such and such prayers and wearing amulets, &c., they are sure of salvation. This is all pure superstition and sin, for these things have no strength or influence. It is superstition to find out from fortune tellers prayers, blessings, conjurations, &c., by which to dispel sickness, guard against danger, inflict injuries upon others, to foretell future events by cards and by vain interpretation of dreams, think to win in lotteries, and all similar things. Those who believe in such deceivers or ask their advice, are guilty of superstition. The most abominable superstition is practised by those who go so far as to seek help and advice from evil spirits, since the evil spirits have not the smallest possession of their own, nor of themselves any knowledge. "In the just judgment of God," says St. Augustine, "it sometimes happens, that those superstitious men who seek from evil spirits to find out things hidden, are made over curious and become involved in the manifold snares of pernicious error. How sinful such superstition is, is evident from its own nature, since by it we set aside God and have no confidence in Him. If God curses those who turn their hearts from Him and place their confidence in man (*Jer.* xvii. 5.), what must those expect who stoop to these superstitions? If you have fears, that such and such things are superstitious, go to your pastor and seek information.

PETITION. O most benign Jesus! who didst permit the doubting and wavering Thomas to touch Thy sacred wounds, and thus freedst him from his unbelief, heal me also, and give me a firm, strong and lively faith, which will continually

urge me to do that which is pleasing to Thee, and leave undone all that is displeasing to Thee.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. STEPHEN THE FIRST MARTYR.

[December 26.]

Short history of the life and sufferings of this saint is contained in the epistle of this day, taken from the acts of the apostles, to which it is only necessary to add, that on account of his good name, his virtues, his wisdom and his zeal for the faith, St. Stephen was held worthy by the apostles of being ordained, by the imposition of hands, the first of the seven deacons whose duty it was, besides announcing the word of God, to attend to the poor, distributing alms among them. In the performance of these duties St. Stephen connected such disinterested love of his neighbor with such zeal for Christ, that he brought upon himself the most intense hatred of the Jews, who finally stoned him to death, thus making him the first martyr for Christ.

The Introit of the Mass is from Psalm CXVIII.: Princes sat and spoke against me: and sinners persecuted me; help me, O Lord, my God, for thy servant hath practised thy commandments. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Glory &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, o Lord, we beseech Thee, that we may imitate him whose memory we celebrate, so as to learn to love even our enemies, because we now solemnize his martyrdom, who knew how to pray, even for his persecutors, to our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son. Who liveth.

LESSON. (*Acts* vi. 8—10., vii. 54—59.) In those days: Stephen, full of grace and fortitude, did great wonders and signs among the people. Now there arose some of that which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of them that were of Cilicia and Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit that spoke. Now hearing these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed with their teeth at him. But he being full of the Holy Ghost, looking up steadfastly to heaven, saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right-hand of God. And

he said: Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right-hand of God. And they, crying out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and with one accord ran violently upon him. And casting him forth without the city, they stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen invoking and saying: Lord Jesus receive my spirit. And falling on his knees, he cried with a loud voice, saying: Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he said this, he fell asleep in the Lord.

INSTRUCTION. St. Stephen's innocence and sanctity were so great, that the angry Jews could not bring the least thing against

him. They, therefore, procured false witnesses who were required to testify, that he had blasphemed against God and the law; but severe as was this accusation, it did not disturb St. Stephen, because his conscience upheld him. Learn from this, that there is no worse tormentor than a bad conscience, no better defender than a good one; for a good conscience is a continual feast and the best comforter in all annoyances (*Prov.* xv. 15.), it goes with us in prison, in distress, in death, yes even before the judgment seat of God. Though so innocent, and so unjustly, so maliciously persecuted and stoned, St. Stephen prayed for his persecutors. Were not St. Stephen and other saints, who did the same, men like we? Can not we also, with God's grace, do what they have done? If we do not wish to do it, then we cannot call ourselves Christians; for the love of our neighbor, even of our enemy, is the principal mark of a Christian, and only by such love can we be true children of the Heavenly Father who maketh His sun to rise on the good and the bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust. (*Matt.* v. 43.)

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxiii. 34—39.) At that time: Jesus said to the Scribes and Pharisees: Behold, I send to you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them you will put to death, and crucify, and some you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city: that upon you may come all the just blood that hath been shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel the just, even unto the blood of Zacharias the son of Barachias, whom you killed between the temple and the altar. Amen, I say to you: all these things shall come upon this generation. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldst not? Behold, your house shall be left to you desolate. For I say to you, you shall not see me henceforth till you say: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Who are here understood by the prophets, wise men, and scribes?

The apostles and disciples of Christ; "for these," says St. Jerome, "received different gifts of the Holy Ghost; some with the gift of prophecy foretold future events, some have known by the wisdom imparted to them, things which they should say, and the time in which to say them; others had in their science a perfect knowledge of the law."

Did the Jews really put any of these to death?

Yes; they stoned Stephen, they beheaded James, the brother of John; cast down another James from the temple, scourged Peter and others, exiled John, while Paul and Barnabas suffered one persecution after another. And so, says St. Paul, must all who wish to live devoutly for Christ, suffer persecution from the wicked. (*Tim.* iii. 12.)

What is meant by: Upon you will come the just blood?

This means, that the guilt and punishment for all the just blood that was shed upon the earth, would come upon the Jews, because they followed their fathers, although they had more knowledge than the fathers had. "Those who follow the wicked", says St. Augustine, "are not only punished, as they deserve, for their own guilt, but for the guilt of those whom they follow."

Why does Christ here compare Himself to a hen?

Because Christ had and still has the most sincere love and the most tender care for the salvation of the Jews and of all men; and as a hen calls her wandering little ones to her side, warns them from danger, and shelters them under her wings, so that nothing evil may befall them, "so Christ sought during His whole life", says St. Hilarius, "to save us by His doctrine, sighs, and sufferings; and as the hen exhausts herself and becomes, for love of her brood, entirely enfeebled, so for love us and to cure our weakness, Christ became frail man; and as the hen turns here and there in accordance with her chickens, so Christ, full of mercy and compassion, moves in compliance with our capacity and our need." In this love He can and should be imitated by preachers, parents, and heads of families, who should strive to keep those under them from doing wrong, and by prayers, admonitions, exhortations, and warnings preserve them from danger.

Who even now stone the preachers and put them to death?

Those who by evil reports insult and lessen the influence of their pastor, despise preachers and their sermons. To such persons it may happen as it did to the Jews, that the faith will be taken from them and given to others more deserving of it.

What is meant by the house made desolate?

In the literal sense these words refer to the temple of Jerusalem which together with the city was, as foretold by Christ, destroyed, forty years after His death, by the Romans; but in the figurative sense they represent the moral condition of the sinner who departs from the grace and guardianship of God, falls a prey to his enemies, and is hurried to perdition.

SUPPLICATION TO ST. STEPHEN. St. Stephen, who wast so full of grace, love, and strength, whose innocence was so great, that thy countenance shone like an angel's, I beseech thee by the grace thou didst receive, so that at thy death thou didst see the heavens open and Jesus at the right hand of His Father, that thou wouldst ask from God for me, that, through purity of conscience and meekness of love, I may after thy example forgive all who insult me, pray for them, not only wishing them good, but doing them good in very deed, and thus receive the grace of a happy death. Through Christ, &c.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. JOHN, THE APOSTLE.

[December 27.]

OHN, the son of Zebedee and of St. Salome, and brother of St. James, the greater, born about eight years later than Christ, was the youngest of the apostles, and before being called by Christ was a fisherman and disciple of St. John, the Baptist. When Jesus called him and his brother, they were mending their nets by the sea of Galilee. He obeyed the call and became our Lord's constant companion, and was with Peter and James His most intimate disciple. Our Lord loved him beyond all the others, especially on account of his great purity of heart, gave him the most tender proofs of His affection, so much so, that at the Last Supper St. John was permitted to lean upon the Saviour's breast; our Lord when dying, gave His beloved Mother Mary into his care, and she was taken home by St. John who never again left her. When the apostles dispersed to preach the gospel in different parts of the world, St. John went to Asia Minor, where he founded many congregations, and that he might be near them, he established his seat at Ephesus, from which city he watched over all the Churches of the country. He was taken to Rome in the year 95, during the reign of the cruel Emperor Domitian, and cast into a kettle of boiling oil, but by wonderful, divine assistance came out of it stronger than ever, and was then banished by the Emperor to the island of Patmos, now called Palmosa. Here he received those marvellous revelations, called the Apocalypse of St. John, which are included in the holy Scriptures and foretell the fate of the Church of God. After the death of Domitian, St. John returned to Ephesus, where at the prayer of the faithful and to refute the heresy which denied the divinity of Christ, he wrote his gospel, in which he soars like an eagle to the subject of Christ's divinity, and proves it indisputably against the heresies of Ebion and Cerinthus. About the same time he also wrote his three epistles, wherein he especially urges to the love of God and one's neighbor. He constantly inculcated this love, especially in his old age, and when he could no longer, because of the weakness of age, deliver long sermons, he would always, when he appeared among the faithful, repeat these words: "My children, love one another," and when once asked: why he said always the same thing? he replied: "This is the commandment of God, and who observers this, does enough." For St. John believed he could not better repay the love which Christ had shown him, than by infusing into all hearts the holy love, which is the perfect bond and the mark of the true disciple

of Jesus. St. John survived all the apostles; at last in the year 100 of our chronology, Christ called to Himself by a placid death, the man of nearly a hundred years, whom He loved so much. The sepulchre of the saint, which is on a hill outside the city of Ephesus, has been glorified by many miracles.

The Introit of the Mass reads: In the midst of the Church the Lord opened his mouth and filled him with the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and clothed him with a robe of glory. (*Eccl.* xv. 65.) It is good to give praise to the Lord, and to sing to thy name, O Most High. (*Ps.* xcv.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Mercifully, O Lord, enlighten Thy Church, that being taught by blessed John, Thy Apostle and Evangelist, she may come to Thy eternal rewards. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Eccl.* xv. 1—6.) He that feareth God, will do good: and he that possesseth justice, shall lay hold on her. And she will meet him as an honourable mother. With the bread of life and understanding, she shall feed him, and give him the water of wholesome wisdom to drink: and she shall be made strong in him, and he shall not be moved: and she shall hold him fast, and he shall not be confounded: and she shall exalt him among his neighbours, and in the midst of the Church she shall open his mouth, and shall fill him with the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and shall clothe him with the robe of glory. She shall heap upon him a treasure of joy and gladness, and our Lord God shall cause him to inherit an everlasting name.

ON PURITY.

HE that loveth wisdom, saith the Holy Ghost, will obtain it; for it will not enter into a malicious soul, nor dwell in a body, subject to sins. (*Wis.* i. 4.) From his childhood St. John was an angel of purity, and was on this account especially loved by Jesus, and gifted by the Holy Ghost with such wisdom and understanding, that, as observed by St. Augustine, "St. John commences his gospel in a grander and nobler strain than that used by the other three evangelists." For while they walk on earth with the God-Man, saying but little concerning His divinity, St. John, as if forgetting the world, soars like an eagle not only far above the earth, but above the wide blue skies, above even the whole angelic hosts, to Him by whom all things were made, saying: In the beginning was the word. At the

Last Supper he was permitted to lean upon our Lord's breast, and that which he silently imbibed in that union, he afterwards openly imparted. Strive, therefore, to maintain purity of heart, that thou mayst be, like St. John, a loved disciple of Christ, and be filled with heavenly wisdom.

GOSPEL. (*John* xxi. 19—24.) At that time: Jesus said to Peter: follow me. Peter turning about, saw that disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also leaned on his breast at supper and said: Lord, who is he that shall betray thee? Him therefore when Peter had seen, he saith to Jesus: Lord and what shall this man do? Jesus saith to him: So I will have him to remain till I come, what is it to thee? follow thou me. This saying, therefore, went abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die. And Jesus did not say to him: He should not die; but, so I will have him to remain till I come, what is it to thee? This is that disciple who giveth testimony of these things, and hath written these things: and we know that his testimony is true.

What did Christ mean by the words: So I will have him to remain till I come. Follow thou me?

He meant to say, that St. John was not to die a violent, but a natural death, while Peter was to be crucified, as our Lord had foretold. (*John* xxi. 18.)

Why did our Lord not answer Peter's question?

He wished to rebuke his inquisitiveness and instruct Him, that we should not be curious about our neighbor's affairs. He who busies Himself over much in his neighbor's concerns, is apt to neglect his own, and cause himself much annoyance and inconvenience.

SUPPLICATION TO ST. JOHN. O St. John, Christ's beloved disciple, who leaned upon His breast at the Last Supper, to whom He from the cross entrusted His mother, I beseech thee by these great graces, to obtain for me and all men purity of heart, sincere devotion to the dying Saviour and His blessed Mother, an ardent love for God and our neighbor, and, finally, a happy death.

Why is wine blessed on this day and given to the faithful to drink?

That all who drink of this blessed wine, may be preserved from all diseases of body and soul, as God preserved St. John, who to confirm the truth of the Christian religion, drank of a

rich, but poisoned wine, without being injured by it; and that we may by St. John's intercession be strengthened and confirmed in the faith and be rightly inflamed with the love of God and our neighbor, of which this wine is a figure, and with which St. John was overflowing. Consequently when presenting the wine, the priest says: Drink the love of St. John, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS.

[December 28.]

The gospel of this day gives the history of the death of these children whom the Church regards as martyrs, because though they could not confess Christ with their lips, they did so by the death which they suffered on account of Herod's hatred of Christ.

The Introit of the Mass is from the eighth Psalm: Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise, because of thy enemies. O Lord, how admirable is thy name in the whole earth. Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, whose praise the Holy Martyrs, the Innocents, published this day, not by speaking, but by dying: mortify in us all our vicious inclinations, that we may shew forth, in our actions, thy faith which we profess with our lips. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Apoc.* xiv. 1—5.) In those days: I beheld the Lamb standing on mount Sion, and with him a hundred forty-four thousand, having his name, and the name of his Father written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of great thunder: and the voice which I heard, was as the voice of harpers, harping on their harps. And they sung as it were a new canticle, before the throne, and before the four living creatures, and the ancients, and no man could say the canticle, but those hundred forty-four thousand, who were purchased from the earth. These are they who were not defiled with women: for they are virgins. These follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were purchased from among men, the first fruits to God, and to the Lamb: and

in their mouths there was found no lie; for they are without spot before the throne of God.

EXPLANATION AND APPLICATION. This vision of St. John is applied to the holy innocents, not because there were one hundred and forty four thousand of them (for the number of the innocents, though not fixed, is certainly not so great), but because they are, on account of their innocence, ranked with the virgins of whom mention is here made; St. John describes the prerogatives of purity, and relates that he had seen the Lamb of God, Christ, on Mount Sion, that is, in heaven surrounded by one hundred and forty four thousand virgins. There is here given a round number to represent the unknown company, in which are included all who carried their innocence to the grave. These are distinguished from all the other saints by the name of the Lamb which is marked upon them, are in a measure like to Him and enjoy His company in an especial manner, which is manifested by the new canticle which none of the other saints can sing. Mark the great preference which virginal innocence holds in heaven; God raises the virginal soul above all the other saints in heaven. And can you throw away this heavenly virtue, this most precious of pearls, for a vain, passing pleasure, which never satisfies the soul, but on the contrary fills it with pain and digust? By no means; ever preserve, then, the robe of innocence clean from all spots, and if you have stained it or by sin have lost it, hasten to do penance for the sin, that you may be received with the sainted penitents into the joys of God and His angels.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* ii. 13—18.) At the same time: An angel of the Lord appeared in sleep to Joseph, saying: Arise, and take the Child and his Mother, and fly into Egypt; and be there until I shall tell thee. For it will come to pass that Herod will seek the Child to destroy him. Who arose, and took the Child and his mother by night, and retired into Egypt: and he was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet, saying: "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." Then Herod perceiving that he was deluded by the wise Men, was exceeding angry: and sending killed all the men-children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the borders thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremias the prophet, saying: "A voice in Rama was heard, lamentation and great mourning: Rachel

bewailing her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."

Why did Herod seek the life of Christ?

Because carried away by pride and ambition, he feared, that by this child, whom the wise men named King of the Jews, he would be deprived of his throne which he had unjustly ursurped and to obtain which he had caused even his son and nearest relations to be put to death.

How ruinous it is to give oneself up to pride! To what will not this passion often lead men! Seek well, that the inclination to pride has not taken root in your heart! Strive, while considering your misery, your poverty, and your sinfulness, to weed it out at once, despising yourself, and continually imploring for the spirit of true humility.

Who are like Herod?

All those who kill innocent children either in body or soul; for example, all imprudent, careless mothers who by excessive dancing, by carrying or lifting heavy burdens, by hurtful eating or drinking, by violent anger or immoderate grief, injure the fruit of their bodies; brutal men who treat their wives while in this condition harshly, yes, even strike them, beat them, and drive them to great anger; careless parents who take their children into bed with them at the risk of suffocating them in their sleep; corrupt and godless women who destroy the fruit of their shame before birth, and thus send them without baptism into the other world. But more cruel even than these, far more cruel than Herod, are those who scandalize the innocent, that is, lead them into sin by holding improper conversations, singing bad songs, making indecent jokes and using immodest words in the presence of children, thus enticing them into this abominable kind of sin. Jesus pronounces a terrible curse upon such people.

What reward did Herod receive for his cruelties?

He was shortly after attacked by a most painful and disgusting disease, which made him so offensive, that he was deserted by every one, and eaten up by worms, in the greatest despair he rushed into hell.

If Herod, the murderer of the bodies of the holy innocents, was so fearfully punished by God, what must the murderers of their innocent souls expect?

What is meant by the words: A voice in Rama was heard?

Of this St. Chrysostom says: "If we are asked, why Rachel bewailing her children, is mentioned here, when it is only the children of Bethlehem that are spoken of, and what connection there is between Rachel and Rama, we answer: Rachel most properly appears here, showing her distress, for she was the mother

of Benjamin (from whom the holy innocents descended) and had buried him in a place in the vicinity of Bethlehem, which was also near Rama, in the land of the tribe of Benjamin. And as Rachel was the mother of the prince of this tribe and this place contained the ashes of the mother, the holy Scripture names the children who were killed, the children of Rachel." From these words may be understood the grief of the mothers over their murdered children.

To weep over the loss of children is most natural, but to weep immoderately is not wise. How can the Christian mother be inconsolable over the loss of her children whom God has taken to Himself? Is it not better for them to be with God in heaven than to live here on earth, exposed to dangers and perhaps lost forever?

FURTHER USEFUL AND CONSOLING LESSONS.

God saved His Son from the hands of Herod in a natural way by flight, although He could have guarded Him in any other way, because He wished us to learn not to expect of Him, that He will help us in a supernatural way, so long as He can aid us in a natural manner. We should learn from the readiness with which Jesus, Mary, and Joseph submitted to God's ordering and arrangements without questioning or murmuring, also to submit in ready obedience to all God's dispositions, without enquiring or complaining about them.

The adverse incidents which these most holy persons, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, had to meet in their lives, can teach us, that God takes pleasure in trying and perfecting His own by proving them through trials and vicissitudes of comfort. Dare we, then, murmur when God so tries us?

Herod sought to slay Jesus, and to secure his end caused a great number of innocent children to be murdered, and yet Jesus escaped him. What are the plans of the wicked against God and His chosen ones? Who fears God and serves Him, against him all the power of hell can do nothing.

SUPPLICATION TO THE HOLY INNOCENTS.

I salute you, innocent little martyrs, who glorified God not by your words, but by your death. What happiness was yours to pass into eternal life almost before you had commenced the temporal! What happiness is now yours who continually follow the true Lamb of God, Jesus Christ! O pray for us, that we may ever confess the faith in Jesus with heart and with lips, and by a pious Christian life, through sufferings and trials reach to Christ whom you now forever enjoy.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. VALENTINE, BISHOP.

[January 7.]

T. Valentine, moved by zeal for the propagation of the kingdom of Christ, came in the middle of the fifth century to that part of the country near which the rivers Inn and Danube meet, and where the city of Passau now stands, in order that he might preach the gospel there; whence he came, is not known. There were already many Christians in this country; but, alas! they were given up to the heresy of that denier of the divinity of Christ, Arius, and his words produced no effect. He found it necessary to go to Rome to the holy Father, Pope Leo I., to obtain permission to preach elsewhere the doctrines of Christ. The pope was surprised to see the saint, and when he heard the reason of his coming, said to him: "Go and preach the faith; be instant in season and out of season; glorious will be the fruit of your trouble, if you but enable yourself to endure and soften the hardness of the long opposing people. But if you fail, you may with my permission and authority become the messenger of the faith to other countries." He, then, consecrated him bishop, and he departed, strengthened by the apostolic benediction. Valentine animated anew returned to Passau, but still his words were without effect. Heretics and pagans joined hands against him and forced him away. With a sorrowful heart he turned towards Rhaetia, which was at that time a part of Bavaria, Switzerland, and Swabia, and there announced the faith of the cross with such effect, that thousands were converted to Christ. Ever further went the saint, the cross in his hand, into the mountains of Switzerland, then to the mountains of the Tyrol, into the fruitful vineyards, called also Passayer-Thal, where in the midst of mountains rising towards heaven, he found a most fertile country. The humblest of the inhabitants came to him with childlike confidence, listening eagerly to his words, and joyfully confessed Christ, the Crucified. He settled at Mais, not far from Meran, and saw, thanking God for it, how in a short time a rich harvest of fervent souls sprang up around him. A little cell, which is even to this day shown in the castle of Newburg, was his dwelling, in which when not preaching, he spent day and night. And when his strength would not permit him any longer to reach all these souls who took the gospel to their heart, he founded a society of priests to assist him, among whom he lived as a father among his children, until on the seventh of January 470 the loving God called him to Himself. Duke Thassilo of Bavaria carried his sacred remains to Passau, where they are held in veneration to this day.

[The Introit, Epistle, and Gospel as on the sixth of December.]

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Be merciful to us, Thy servants, O Lord, by the glorious merits of the blessed Valentine, Confessor and Bishop, that by his intercession we may be preserved from all evils, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. ANTHONY,

ABBOT AND FATHER OF THE HERMITS.

[January 17.]

Nthony, whom the succeeding ages surnamed the Great and whose life was written by St. Athanasius, was born at Koman, a village in Upper Egypt. His noble, and pious parents, withheld their son from all enticements of the world, so that Anthony knew only his parents and younger sister. He consequently visited no school and remained ignorant regarding human science. Nevertheless, Anthony shewed an eminent understanding, was obedient, pious and a zealous visitor of the Churches, together with his parents. Being about 18 years of age, he lost his parents by death. From this moment the management of domestic affairs devolved entirely upon him, he discharged them; most faithfully, taking the greatest possible care of his young sister. So he lived six months among the considerable riches, inherited from his parents, when going once to church he meditated on the Apostles, who abandoned all earthly goods for Christ's imitation and on the first Christians at Jerusalem who lived in community of goods.

By ordination of divine Providence, at Anthony's very entrance into the church Christ's words to the youth were read: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell what thou hast, and give it to the poor, and thou shalt have a treasure in heaven, and come and follow me." These words so pierced his heart that he hastened home, as soon as the divine service had ended, distributed his estates among his neighbors, sold his movables, gave the money thereof to the poor and only kept for his and his sister's support a small sum in reserve. Once more being in church and there hearing the words of the Son of God: "Take therefore no thought for the morrow," he immediately delivered committed up even the small remainders of his own, his sister to the care of virgins living in holy community, and took a solitary

abode near the village, to imitate the example of a pious old man, who had already been a hermit for many years. An interruption of this retirement only took place, when he frequented other hermits, both to enkindle the flame of his own faith, hope, love and virtues at theirs and to learn to imitate their religious exercises and mortifications. The hermits, in return, loved Anthony because of his humility and were more and more edified by him.

The saint at this time grievously suffered under various temptations by Satan, scruples concerning his way of life, thoughts of pride, and he was vehemently assailed by the sin of lust.

Anthony however defeated his foes by fasting, vigils, prayer, meditations and most of all by labor, the wages of which he distributed to the poor.

Some time after St. Anthony left even his present solitude and penetrated into a deeper wilderness, where he lived unknown to any human being, save that one who brought him his scanty daily meal. There he ate but once a day after the setting of the sun. Many times, too, he spent two or three days without eating aught, passed many a night waking, and what little repose he allowed to himself, was taken on the bare ground, or upon rushes or his hairy cloth.

By divine permission not even this self-denying life was free from the most violent temptations and cruels assaults of the malignant spirits; yet the saint did not fear anything, God himself, who so vouchsafingly taught him, being his refuge and strength. One day weary of his solitude, Anthony said to God: "Behold, O Lord, I so much desire to become a saint, yet the thoughts do not allow me!" Immediately he heard the following voice: "Step out of thy cavern and look!" Anthony did so, and saw a man, who sat laboring, then rose and prayed. Now the same voice came again saying: "Imitate him, and thou also wilt be a saint!" On another day when after a severe struggle with the infernal foes a bright ray of celestial light fell into his cavern making the devils disappear, the saint asked the Lord: "Where wast Thou, O my Jesus, that Thou didst not help sooner?" Affectionately the Lord answered him: "I was with thee, Anthony, I witnessed thy struggle nor will I ever forsake thee!" From this day the saint felt encouraged to do every good work.

Anthony continued this mode of living for 15 years, when at the age of 28, he left his cavern, and crossing the Nile, retired into the most horrible desert, where he chose a dilapidated castle for his abode. Nobody knew him here, except a pious hermit, who semiannually provided him with a loaf of bread, which he threw over the wall, without either seeing or speaking to him. In this new retreat the saint lived 20 years, labor, prayer and the singing of holy psalms being his occupation. At last, about the year 305, his present abode was detected by his former friends, who in great numbers again flocked to him and unceasingly be-

sought him to leave his miserable mansion and abide together with them at Thebais, where they built the cloister Phainon.

St. Anthony yielded to their petition; most lovingly he now took care of his brethren. His wisdom and clemency, his example and above all the miracles through which by divine power he restored the sick to health and exorcised the demons, conducted crowds of disciples to his monastery. Like his divine master he spent days and nights in meditation, prayer, and chanting of pious hymns. The saint's food now was merely a small piece of bread, which he soaked in water and strewed over with salt. Sometimes he added a couple of fruits, but then again he abstained three or even four days from any food. Often, when he ate together with his disciples, it happened that he wept or went off without tasting anything, because he remembered the happiness of the blessed, who without need of food praise God for ever. Thus St. Anthony's only joy was to lock himself up in his cell and devote himself to the practise of prayer and meditation. By no means, however, did he neglect, to rule his large community with circumspection and fatherly love, infusing into the minds of his disciples those precious doctrines of Christian perfection, handed down to us by St. Athanasius, who was the bosom friend of our saint. Some of these inestimable doctrines may find a place here. First: "To a Christian nothing is more useful than to think every day: to day I commence serving God and this very day is the last of my life. Secondly: There is no better remedy against a relaxation in fervor, than the continual remembrance of the shortness of this life and the uncertainty of death. Thirdly: Temptations are easily to be overcome by diffiding in our own strength, and confiding in God." Somebody once asked the saint: "What shall I do to please God?" To him the saint said: "Wheresoever thou shalt go, have God before thy eyes. Whatsoever thou shalt do, consult holy Scripture. Wheresoever thou sittest down, do not too speedily go away. If thou thus wilt act, thou wilt be saved." Yet, while caring for other's salvation, Anthony did not at all forget his own soul, devoting his spare time either to prayer or labor, so as to weave mats of rushes or cultivate his garden. While thus working, the saint, however, was uninterruptedly occupied with God, his heart being so filled with divine love that he could say: I do not fear God so much as I love him. Nor did his life, which was all absorbed in God, hinder him from taking all possible interest in the welfare of the holy Church. As soon as he had heard of the emperor Maximian's persecution against the Christians, he hastened to Alexandria, there to corroborate the Christians in the faith and perhaps to attain for himself the crown of martyrdom. He entered prisons and mines to search for Christians, encouraged them, at the tribunals, forced himself through the midst of crowds of people and guards accompanying the martyrs upon the scaffolds; nobody

seized him though he publicly wore his hermit's garment. When the persecution was over, Anthony, who most sorrowfully regretted that his fervent desire, to die for Christ's sake not had been realized, sadly returned into his solitude. More and more grew the number of youths, who entrusted themselves to the saint's direction, under whose guardianship were already three monasteries. These monasteries were, as St. Athanasius says, as many temples and heavens, in which no other voices resounded than those of God's praise and where nobody thought of else but prayer, spiritual reading, fasting, vigil and labor in support of the poor.

The direction of so numerous a flock occasioned the saint too many distractions, which at last became insupportable to him. Therefore he made his escape, and penetrated into a still deeper wilderness in search of a quiet and retired abode. After a three days' wandering he reached the mountain Kalzim only a three days' journey distant from the Red Sea; at the foot of this mountain, bubbled forth a most healthy spring under the shady leaves of a palm-tree. This, then, was the spot where the saint erected three cells and thanked God for the quiet mansion. But the disciples in search for their master, also discovered him here, he however did not permit them to build themselves cells and to fix their abodes in his neighborhood. Thus, in a distance of about 20 miles, a new monastery was erected, into which numbers of Christians took refuge to renounce the world and enable themselves to serve God without reserve. Anthony often visited them; once every year he also visited the disciples of the former monasteries. All the day the saint now devoted to prayer, rising at midnight, and upon his knees, with hands stretched heavenwards, he prayed until daybreak or even three o' clock in the afternoon. Not seldom, when the rising sun aroused him of his collection of mind, Anthony complainingly exclaimed: "What have I to do with thee, O sun, why dost thou come to distract me?" Once, all absorbed in meditation, he saw the earth all covered with snares, nets and traps, and Satan at work to catch mankind. Astonished at his terrible scene, St. Anthony cried out: "Who could escape there!" To which a voice replied: "Humility alone;" that means, everybody who diffides in himself, and does not wilfully expose himself to danger, flees the occasions of sins and trusts only in God.

Though the saint was greatly attached to prayer, yet he never neglected to labor by handwork. With the sweat on his brow he exerted himself to subject to cultivation a small field that he might raise on it a little grain, for his support. Adjacent to the field was a garden in which he planted vegetables, to serve his brethren that came to visit him. The matrasses, he made, were sold in support of the poor.

Notwithstanding the saintly hermit fled the world, abhorred all praise, declined accepting any mark of honor, so that the call

of his holy life surprised the world. The emperor Constantine and his son recommended themselves to his prayer. Anthony at first declined answering the imperial letter, but at last yielding to the prayers of his brethren, answered their majesties in the following remarkable words: "I praise you for your faith in Jesus Christ. Be not proud of your dignity, but be mindful of Jesus Christ, who will judge you." In closing the letter, our saint called the emperors' attentions to his subjects, admonishing him, to exercise clemency towards them, and especially to be merciful to the poor. When the sectarian Arius denied Christ to be true God, Anthony was called upon by the bishops. Without hesitation the holy man listened to the call and came to Alexandria where he was cheerfully received not only by the faithful but even by the unbelievers, who flocked together from all sides to see and hear him. After he had testified there the true faith and confirmed his words by miracles, Anthony without any delay returned to his retreat. Shortly after he perceived the end of his life to approach, when with a cheerful air he said to his scholars: "I see the Lord ready to call me home. Be you watchful, do not lose the fruits of the labors of so many years. Always follow Christ and confide in Him." He also caused the brethren to be reminded of the duty to shun all intercourse with those who wilfully had deserted the Church. To which he added: "First of all endeavor to belong to the Lord, then be attached to the saints also, that as through your friends and relatives after death they may take you into the eternal mansions." St. Anthony's last words were: "Bring my clothes to the bishop Athanasius and Serapion, for yourselves keep my girdle. Fare well my children." With a bright countenance he embraced death as if he were a welcome friend; our great saint expired in the year 356 in the extraordinary age of 105 years.

The Introit of this day's Mass runs: The mouth of the just man shall meditate wisdom, and his tongue speak judgment: the law of his God is in his heart. (*Ps.* xxxvi.) Be not emulous of evil doers, nor envy them that work iniquity. Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. We beseech Thee, O Lord, to be pleased by the blessed Abbot Anthony's intercession for us; that, what through our own merits we cannot reach, we may obtain by his protection. Through, &c.

LESSON. (*Eccl.* xliv.) He waths beloved to God and men; his memory is blessed. He hath glorified him like the saints, magnified him to the terror of the enemies and upon his word made cease the huge plagues. He glorified him before kings and entrusted him with orders to his people and re-

vealed him His glory. For his loyalty and meekness He hallowed him and elected him before all men. He let him hear His voice and led him into the cloud. In His presence He gave him the commandments, the law of life and discipline.

EXPLANATION. These words of the Holy Ghost refer to God's friend, Moses, but the Church here justly applies them to St. Anthony, since he likewise was loved by God and man. His memory is ever blessed; God has exalted this most humble saint in a order to terrify devils and unbelievers. His powerful words expelled the plagues that the wicked spirits inflicted on man. Before emperors and kings the Lord did glorify him and even vouchsafed at many times to converse with him, laying the words of prayer, divine love and holy discipline upon the saint's tongue, who was thus enabled to show to the many thousands that flocked to him, the way of salvation.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xii. 35—40.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: Let your loins be girt, and lamps burning in your hands, and you yourselves like to men who wait for their lord, when he shall return from their wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching: Amen, I say to you, that he will gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and passing will minister unto them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. But this know ye, that if the householder did know at what hour the thief would come, he would surely watch, and would not suffer his house to be broke open. Be you then also ready: for at what hour you think not, the Son of man will come.

INSTRUCTION. What does the Redeemer mean by the words: "Let your loins be girded and your lights be burning." He will say: we must continually be ready to serve God and receive the Lord when at the end of our lives He comes for judgment; like the servant in the East, who in order to work with greater ease truss up their undergarments. Moreover the Orientals gird their clothes when undertaking a journey, that they may walk easier and quicker. The burning lamps, then, mean the three divine virtues Faith, Hope and Love and also the good works, with which we must be adorned, when the Lord shall come to judge the world.

Who are the watchful servants?

Those Christians, that are neither wretched sinners living only for this earth, nor indolent forgetters of God, death, judgment and their last end, but who often think of death, by a true Christian life prepare themselves for it, have God continually before their eyes and thus preserve themselves free from sin.

What signifies the watch, the Lord comes in?

The first vigil signifies death, the second, judgment immediately after death, the third, universal judgment at the end of the world.

ASPIRATION. O dear saint Anthony, who by the power of the Cross victoriously overcamest every temptation; help and assist me, that when the seducer approaches to incite me to do evil, I also may victoriously combat and triumph over him, and thus gain the crown of heaven. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. PETER'S CHAIR AT ROME.

[January 18. and February 22.]

What is this festival?

IT is the festival by which the Church celebrates the anniversary of the day upon which St. Peter as the Vicar of Christ, established his Episcopal See at Antioch in Syria, and seven years later for himself and his successors the Apostolic Chair at Rome, which he occupied for twenty five years before his death. The Feast of St. Peter's Chair at Rome is celebrated by the Church on January 18th, that of the See at Antioch on the 22nd of February.

Why did St. Peter remove the Apostolic See to Rome?

Because Rome was at that time, so to speak, the capital of the world and the centre of all errors. Hence it was proper, as Pope St. Leo says, that this city should be made the centre and head of the true, Catholic religion, and that the light of faith be carried by the apostolic authority over the whole world, in the same manner as by the power of Rome error had been diffused over the whole earth.

What ought Catholics to do on this day?

They should thank God, that He founded the Roman, Catholic, Apostolic Church for them, and pray to Him for the supreme head of the Church, the Pope at Rome, that he may be given the grace to follow St. Peter in zeal for religion and the salvation of souls, as he follows him in the Apostolic Chair.

[The Introit of the Mass as on the Feast of St. Nicholas.]

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who by delivering to the blessed Apostle Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven, didst give him the power of binding and loosing: grant that, by his intercession, we may be freed from the bonds of our sins. Who livest.

EPISTLE. (i. *Pet.* i. 1—7.) Peter, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers dispersed through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, unto the sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: grace unto you and peace be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy hath regenerated us unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that cannot fade, reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are kept by faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein you shall greatly rejoice, if now you must be for a little time made sorrowful in divers temptations: that the trial of your faith (much more precious than gold, which is tried by the fire) may be found unto praise, and glory, and honour, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

EXPLANATION. This epistle may be regarded as a general pastoral letter which St. Peter, as pope, addressed to the whole Christian flock, to all Christians, whom he looked upon as strangers in the world, especially to those whom he had himself converted. He entreats them to give thanks to God for their redemption through Jesus Christ, and for His having called them to the faith and the inheritance of heaven, which they should look upon as their true fatherland, and which they must merit, even, if it should be necessary, by withstanding all manner of temptations.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xvi. 13—19.) At that time: Jesus came into the quarters of Cesarea Philippi: and he asked his disciples saying: Whom do men say that the Son of Man is? But they said: Some, John the Baptist, and some other, Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. Jesus saith to them: But whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art Christ the Son of the living God. And Jesus answering, said to him: Blessed art

thou Simon Bar-Jona; because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.

Why does Christ, here and in other places, call himself the Son of Man?

From humility and to teach us that He is not only the true Son of God but also of man, and a descendant, according to the flesh, of Adam. Christ was necessarily man, because He was to suffer for the sins of the world, rendering satisfaction for them, and as God he could not suffer. We must, therefore, if we wish to be saved, believe that Christ is both true God and true man.

Why was Peter the only one to answer the question: But whom do you say that I am?

Because he, as St. Jerome says, was already appointed by God as head of all the apostles and of the whole Church, and here as well as after the resurrection of Christ, spoke in the name of all the apostles, who made his professions theirs, as must all the faithful, if they wish to be saved.

What is expressed by Peter's words: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God?

That Christ is the true Messiah, promised by God, the Lord's Anointed, and the only begotten Son of God from all eternity, who is life itself, and who gives life to all things.

Let us often say and confess aloud, that Christ is the Son of the living God; for this profession is the manifest sign of a true Christian, especially in our days, when impious freethinkers deny the divinity of Christ, the only begotten Son of God, seeking to degrade Him, our tender Redeemer, to the level of a common man. Woe to him who does not make St. Peter's confession his own; such a one is no member of the Church, no child of salvation, no heir of the kingdom of heaven!

Whence did Peter receive the knowledge of Christ's divinity?

Christ Himself says, that Peter had received this knowledge by divine inspiration, and not from natural sources.

This is a proof, that faith is a gift of God, a divine light, which enlightens man, by which he believes and professes that which God reveals.

Why did Christ call St. Peter blessed?

Because he firmly believed in the divinity of Christ, and to be blessed in this world consists in believing in Jesus and loving Him, as in the other world it consists in beholding and possessing Him. This, says St. John (xvii. 3.), is eternal life: that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

These words: Blessed art thou, which Christ said to Peter, suggested to the Council at Ephesus to name St. Peter thrice blessed, from which came the custom of calling his successors, the popes, "Most Blessed Father", and later "Holy Father."

What reward did St. Peter receive for his acknowledgment of Christ?

Besides promising him eternal salvation, Christ gave him the highest place and authority over all the apostles, and announced to him that on him as on a rock would be founded and built the Church of Christ, against which hell with all its persecutions and heresies should never prevail.

See how wonderfully Christ's promise is fulfilled! Nearly eighteen centuries have passed away, since the Saviour founded His Church upon the blessed Apostle Peter and his successors, the Roman popes; thousands of heresies have arisen since then from the port of hell, all have raged with inexpressible fury against the Chair of St. Peter, and yet the Chair of St. Peter still stands at Rome unshaken, and in it, serene and unharmed, in all the power of his apostolic dignity, sits the Holy Father, the Head of the Church, the Successor of St. Peter. But the heresies the winds have blown away, or the teeth of time have gnawed into the poor sects which have nothing but hatred of the Church and its head to keep them together; more than eighteen hundred years have passed away, kings and emperors, yes, whole cities and nations, have arisen against the Church and her supreme Head, the Pope, have reddened their hands in the blood of the faithful, the priests, bishops, popes, and have rejoiced in the wild presumption, that they had obliterated the Church and the holy See from the earth, and lo! the kings and emperors are dust, the nations have disappeared, and the Church and the Chair — they are standing yet! No stone is broken in that glorious edifice, the Church, which Christ founded on Peter and his successors, and from the mouth of the holy Father there sounds over the whole earth that same great answer of St. Peter: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, and millions repeat it after him, praising him as blessed because they are thus united with Peter as members of Christ's body, and in faithful observance of Christ's holy doctrine have part in the salvation of His heavenly kingdom. Hold, then, firm and fast to the holy Roman Catholic Church and her Head the Pope at Rome, and be not betrayed by the pitiful talk of light and progress into the ruin, which has allured many men from the

true living faith and true Catholic love, and even sometimes perjured, impious, apostate priests, who would tear you away from the true living vine which is Christ, and from the shining light of liberty and progress which live and work only in the Church, which to-day and yesterday is ever the same, and teaches no other liberty and knows no other progress than freedom from the yoke of sin by mortification and selfdenial, and the continual advancement in virtue and sanctity, towards Him who has already promised to every one who faithfully perseveres in faith in Him and His holy Church endless life and salvation and indescribable reward in His heavenly kingdom.

Is Peter really the rock of the Church?

Yes, by reason of his faith and in his faith, for the Church consists of faithful ones, and consequently the foundation of the Church must be a faithful man of rock, Peter. Christ so understood it, for He said to Peter: Thou art Peter, that is a rock, and on this rock I build my Church, and it has always been the visible personal rock, Peter and his followers, the popes, who by their faith have saved the Church from the attacks of hell, from false and sacrilegious doctrines. For this reason the principal attacks of all heretics always have been and are now directed against the successors of St. Peter, the Popes at Rome, because it is well known, that if the corner stone, the foundation of the Church, is destroyed, the Church itself falls. But Christ has promised, that the powers of hell who would change trust and virtue into error and vice, shall not prevail against her.

What is meant by the keys of the kingdom of heaven?

The keys were and are still a sign of the highest power and authority with which one person can entrust another. (*Isai* xxii. 22.) In the East even now the giving of keys signifies the part of the power to reign or command, and we understand by giving up of the keys of a city to a king or general, that the city is surrendered to him. The words of Jesus: and I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, cannot, therefore, be made to mean as the heretics assert, that Peter was to open the doors of Christianity to the Jews and pagans, having converted them to the true faith, but that Peter has the chief legislative and judicial power in the Church of Christ.

What is meant by binding and loosing?

Binding and loosing in the first place means, according to Isaias (xxii. 22.), to open and close the kingdom of heaven, that is, to receive or reject from the Catholic Church founded by Christ; in the next place to remit or retain sin and its punishment; to impose penances upon penitents, to moderate or to remit them (indulgences); to excommunicate or place under ban, that is, to exclude from the Church and from the means of salvation the faithless,

impious, &c.; to make or recall certain commandments and prohibitions; to make laws of punishment; to settle dogmas and to require their acceptance by the faithful; in a word, to order all that is necessary for the preservation of unity in the faith, and for the external discipline of the Church.

Was not the power to bind and to loose given to the rest of the apostles?

Yes (*Matt.* xviii.; *John* xx.); but it does not follow from this, as asserted by heretics, that Christ did not intend to distinguish St. Peter above the rest of the apostles, and to promise to make him the chief pastor; for at the time when Christ gave the apostles power to bind and to loose, St. Peter was with them, but in this case they were not with St. Peter, Christ speaks to St. Peter alone and gives to him only and in a solemn manner the chief guard of the keys, thus showing the other apostles, that they should practise their power only in union with him. St. Cyprian writes thus on this subject: "Although Christ after His resurrection gave to all His apostles equal power, He built His Church on one, and for unity placed fast a seat of doctrine, and so ordered it thus in virtue of His authority, that this unity should originate with one."

SUPPLICATION. O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God! who didst found Thy Church on St. Peter as on a rock, and didst entrust him with the keys of the kingdom of heaven, placing him and his successors as chief pastors of the Church and its earthly government, grant us Thy grace, that we may obey all their directions as we obey Thee, and that we may be, like St. Peter, immovable rocks in all good things.

INSTRUCTION CONCERNING THE PAPACY.

What do we Catholics understand by the pope?

THE general and visible head of the Church of Christ (the assemblage of all true believers), the Bishop of Rome.

Did Christ really institute such a head?

That He did so, is clearly proven in this day's gospel, wherein Christ promised to build His Church on St. Peter as on a rock, and to give to him the keys of the kingdom of heaven: this can mean nothing less than that Peter is the visible foundation and corner-stone of the visible Church (the invisible foundation and corner-stone is Christ Himself. *Eph.* ii. 20.), and that with the reception of the keys he should assume the chief government of the Church. Christ after His resurrection faithfully accomplished this promise, when He expressly named St. Peter shepherd over all His lambs and His sheep, that is, over the faithful as over the bishops and priests. (*John* xxi. 15—17.)

Did St. Peter conduct himself as head of the Church?

Yes, for after the resurrection of our Lord, he showed himself always the head in all ecclesiastical affairs, for which reason St. Chrysostom also calls him "the mouthpiece of the apostles, the prince and head of that group." Thus he led the election of Matthias to the place among the apostles, made vacant by the treason of Judas (*Acts* i. 25—26.); thus he spoke first in the first general assembly of the Church at Jerusalem, with him the whole assembly afterwards agreed (*Acts* xv. 1—10.), and in the gospels if here and there there is a difference made among the apostles, St. Peter is always placed first (*Mark* x. 16.; *Luke* vi. 14.); St. Matthew says: The first Simon who is called Peter (*Matt.* x. 2.), since Peter was by no means first according to calling, it is evident that according to position the other apostles acknowledged him as their head.

Did not this chief pastorship of St. Peter end with his death?

No, it did not end then and could not, because by Christ's unfailing promise the Church continues and will continue unto the end of the world, and to retain unity in matters of faith and moral doctrine there must be a central point, which is and can be no other than the successor of St. Peter, the Bishop of Rome, in which city St. Peter for twenty five years reigned over the Church of Christ, where he died a martyr's glorious death, and where he lies buried, as impartial history testifies. The Bishops at Rome have, therefore, ever since held this supreme pastorship over the whole Church, without there having ever been a well grounded objection to their doing so; the Roman Bishops have been honored not only by single bishops, but also by general councils, as Heads of the Church, and given the highest titles, as, for instance, St. Irenaeus calls the Bishop of Rome the, "Bishop of Bishops", and the Council of Chalcedon the "Prince of Bishops." The union with the Bishop of Rome in matters of faith and doctrine, has always been regarded as the badge of a true Christian, and on account of this union with the Bishop of Rome, the Pope, we call ourselves Roman Catholics, and no one can make us ashamed of the title, for as the great Father of the Church, St. Jerome, writes: "I meanwhile declare aloud: Who holds to the faith of St. Peter's Chair, he is mine." So keep ever firmly to this centre-point of unity, St. Peter's Chair; for "how can he regard himself," writes St. Cyprian, "as a member of the Church, who leaves out the doctrine of St. Peter's Chair, on which the Church is founded?"

What is a bishop?

A bishop is a successor of the apostles, who in union with the successor of St. Peter, the Pope, is called upon to rule and guide the Church, and is usually placed at the head of a single diocese.

What do we understand by archbishops, primates, and patriarchs?

The archbishops are, like the bishops, rulers of dioceses, but have besides the direction of a number of bishops, and of dioceses lying near their own; these episcopates taken together are called a Church Province. A primate is the bishop of the first and most important diocese in the country, the name may be simply an honorary title, or the primate may have, as the pope's governor, an actual authority and jurisdiction. A patriarch is a bishop under whose direction and spiritual authority are placed all the bishops and archbishops of several provinces or even nations.

ON EXCOMMUNICATION.

From the authority to bind and to loose, expressly given by Christ to St. Peter and his successors, the popes, and in the same manner to the other apostles and their successors, the bishops (*Matt.* xviii. 18.), the pope has the right and the power for the whole Church, and the bishop for his diocese, not only to give or refuse absolution to sinners, but to impose punishment for grievous crimes, when sinners stubbornly persist in their sins.

The most severe of these punishments and the most terrible in its consequences, is that of Excommunication.

Excommunication is a punishment, a spiritual punishment of the Church, by which a Christian on account of some great sin is shut out from the membership of the Church, and wholly or in part deprived of the spiritual riches flowing from it.

Excommunication is of two kinds, the greater and the lesser.

He who is under the greater ban from the pope or bishop, or has fallen into this condition, has no longer the right to receive the Sacraments, is excluded from the community of the faithful, has no further share in the good works and merits of the just, or in the public prayers of the Church, and cannot gain an indulgence. Only on one day of the year, on Good Friday, does the Church publicly pray for these unhappy ones, that they may become better. Finally, such a person is not permitted to be present at the holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the other services of the Church, but is allowed to be present at Christian instructions.

The lesser ban prevents him who comes under it from receiving the Sacraments, but not from attending Church and divine service.

Excommunication is not only a punishment, but a remedy, for as soon as an excommunicated person becomes better, the Church with great joy receives him again into her communion, and absolves him from the continuance of the punishment. As excommunication is the severest of punishments, it can be pronounced only on account of great crimes, and only after many repeated admonitions to improvement. The Catholic Church conducts her-

self in this as a good, careful mother, who warns and exhorts her children, and, at last, when nothing else avails, inflicts punishment, but only in order to bring the stubborn child to a knowledge of having committed wrong and reformation. The Church has for this the right which Christ expressly gave her (*Matt.* xviii. 15-18.), and of which the apostles themselves made use, as St. Paul in the case of the incestuous person at Corinth. (i. *Cor.* v. 4.) Besides, as the Church is a visible organization, and as every organization has the right to exclude rebellious and stubborn members from the advantages of its community, no one can deny the same right to the Church. If the Church had not this right and the power to execute it, she would have to give herself up to be broken to pieces and destroyed, as is already the case with protestantism. He who loves and exactly obeys the commandments of God and the directions in matters of faith and morals of the Church, has nothing to fear, for excommunication is only used in punishment for great crimes.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. SEBASTIAN, MARTYR.

[January 20.]

T. Sebastian was born and brought up by Christian parents in Narbonne, a city in the South of France. On account of his splendid talents and irreproachable conduct, the Emperor Diocletian appointed him captain of the first legion of his body-guards. The saint made use of this high place of honor and power to relieve the poor and to assist the Christians, especially those in prison. He would visit them to aid them, console them, and encourage them to firm perseverance in faith, to suffer, and to die for Christ. By his ardent zeal he even effected the conversion of many pagans, among whom was the judge Cromatius, who with his whole family and fourteen hundred slaves, whom he liberated, received baptism, gave up his office and withdrew to his country seat. When Fabian, the successor in office of Chromatius heard this, he sent for St. Sebastian and reproached him for the crime of having perverted Romans under his command to the Christian faith. The saint replied: "I believe, I can do the state no greater service; for the more faithfully they serve Christ, the more faithfully will they serve their temporal master." When the emperor was informed of this affair, he was enraged and ordered his soldiers to bind Sebastian to a post and shoot him with arrows. The sentence was carried out; the soldiers believing they had killed the saint, left him. But a Christian widow, named Irene, who went in the night to bury him, found him yet living, and at once had him brought in secret to her house, where his wounds

soon became healed. But burning for a martyr's death, he could by no persuasion be withheld from going to the emperor, to whom he said: "Sir, can it be possible you still listen to slanders against the Christians? I come to you once more to assure you, you have not in your whole country more useful and more faithful subjects than the Christians, who pray for the welfare of the whole nation." When Diocletian saw, that Sebastian still lived, he was wholly surprised and exclaimed: "What! are you still alive?" "Yes, replied the saint," the Lord has preserved my life, that I may tell you, how impious you are in persecuting the Christians." The emperor, incensed beyond measure, ordered Sebastian to be scourged to death, and thus it came about that on the 20th of January, 288, Sebastian was taken to heaven to receive the martyr's crown. The pagans threw his body into a sewer, where it was found hanging on a hook, by Lucina, a woman of great virtue, who caused it to be taken out, and had him buried at the entrance of the cemetery, which is to this day called the Catacomb of St. Sebastian.

EXPRESSIONS OF ST. SEBASTIAN.

HE who enjoys every pleasure in this life which so quickly ends, will lose all pleasure in that life which never ends.

The Christian fears not the sufferings of this life, for he knows that with them he buys eternal happiness, and that for every passing pain he receives an eternal joy. Let us not fear to suffer an hour's pain in our body, who seek to enjoy ourselves forever with Christ.

The Introit of the Mass reads: Let the sighing of the prisoners come in before thee, O Lord; render to our neighbors sevenfold in their bosom; revenge the blood of thy saints, which has been shed. (*Ps.* lxxviii.)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Have regard to our weakness, O Almighty God, and since the weight of our own deeds is grievous to Thee, may the glorious intercession of Thy blessed Martyr Sebastian protect us. Through Christ our Lord, &c.

EPISTLE. (*Hebr.* xi. 33—39.) BRETHREN: The saints by faith conquered kingdoms,[1]) wrought justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,[2]) quenched the violence of fire,[3]) escaped the edge of the sword,[4]) recovered strength from weakness, became valiant in battle, put to flight the armies of foreigners: women received their dead raised to

[1]) Gideon and David. [2]) As Samson, David, Daniel. [3]) The three children in the fiery furnace. [4]) Elias, David.

life again.[1]) But others were racked, not accepting deliverance, that they might find a better resurrection.[2]) And others had trial of mockeries and stripes, moreover also of bands and prisons: they were stoned, they were cut asunder, they were tempted, they were put to death by the sword, they wandered about in sheep-skins, and in goat-skins, being in want, distressed, afflicted: of whom the world was not worthy; wandering in deserts, in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth. And all these being approved by the testimony of faith, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

EXPLANATION. The apostle shows by many examples from history, especially from the Old Testament, the virtue there is in a living faith, and what strength it gives its confessors to endure unmoved the greatest tortures.

Where do we in our days find such living faith? For fear of a little mockery or the petty scorn of socalled enlightened Christians, who have abandoned the practice of their religion, even Catholics otherwise faithful and pious, often omit the practice and public profession of their faith. To such will one day be made good the words of our Lord: He that shall deny me before men, I will deny him before my Father who is in heaven. (*Matt.* x. 33.)

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE.

[January 25.]

The full history of this conversion is given in this day's Lesson, which is taken from the Acts of the Apostles.

The Introit of the Mass is as follows: I know whom I have believed and I am certain, that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day. (ii. *Tim.* i. 12.) Lord, thou hast proved me, and hast known me: thou hast known my sitting down and my uprising. Glory be to the Father, &c. — This Introit shows, how valuable are good works in God's eyes, since He so faithfully preserves them for reward.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who, by the preaching of blessed Paul Thy Apostle, didst instruct the whole

[1]) The widow of Sarepta, who through Elias received her son. [2]) The Machabees.

world; grant, we beseech Thee, that we, who this day honor his conversion, may, by his example, learn to come to Thee. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Acts* ix. 1—22.) In those days: Saul breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, and asked of him letters to Damascus, to the synagogues, that if he found any men and women of this way, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. And as he went on his journey, it came to pass that he drew nigh to Damascus: and suddenly a light from heaven shined round about him. And falling on the ground he heard a voice saying to him: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Who said: Who art thou, Lord? And he said: I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the goad. And he trembling and astonished, said: Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said to him: Arise, and go into the city, and there it shall be told thee what thou must do. Now the men who went in company with him stood amazed, hearing indeed a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw nothing. But they leading him by the hand, brought him to Damascus. And he was there three days without sight, and he did neither eat nor drink. Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias: and the Lord said to him in a vision: Ananias. And he said: Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said to him: Arise and go into the street that is called Strait, and seek in the house of Judas, one named Saul of Tarsus. For behold, he prayeth. (And he saw a man named Ananias, coming in and putting his hands upon him, that he might recover his sight.) But Ananias answered: Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints in Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that invoke thy name. And the Lord said to him: Go thy way, for this man is to me a vessel of election, to carry my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house: and laying his hands upon him, he said: Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus

hath sent me, he that appeared to thee in the way as thou camest: that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell upon his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight: and rising up he was baptized. And when he had taken meat, he was strengthened. And he was with the disciples that were at Damascus for some days. And immediately he preached Jesus in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. And all that heard him were astonished, and said: Is not this he who persecuted in Jerusalem those who called upon this name: and came hither for that intent that he might carry them bound to the chief priests? But Saul increased much more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, affirming that this is the Christ.

What are we taught by this history?

That we should not despise any sinner, nor despair of his conversion; for the greatest sinner may be at once converted by the grace of God, and even become a great saint, like St. Paul, who, while he was seeking to exterminate the Christians, became a chosen instrument in the hands of God for the instruction of the people; that we should fervently pray for the conversion of sinners, as did St. Stephen for Saul (this was Paul's name before he became a Christian) and won by his prayer the grace of his conversion. (*Acts* vii. 57—59.) To pray for the conversion of sinners, is to make fruitful for them the sufferings of Christ, cooperating with those sufferings, that the heartfelt wish of our Saviour who came into this world to save sinners, and who still intercedes for them in heaven, may be realized.*)

Let us learn from this, how we must preserve our conversion. Paul at his conversion became physically blind, but spiritually so enlightened, that he immediately exclaimed: Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? He then, by God's direction, took Ananias as his guide in the way of salvation, and he afterwards spoke as much for the honor of Christ as he had previously persecuted the faithful. In the same manner a convert should close his eyes to everything which has led him wrongly, and look only at that which God requires from him; he should furthermore entrust

*) In the year 1836 there arose in the most remarkable manner in Paris the Confraternity of the Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary, having for its object to obtain the blessed Virgin's intercession for the conversion of sinners. What a grand and meritorious object! You, too, O Christian, should hasten to join this fraternity, that, in union with its millions of members, you may by fervent humble prayer, do somewhat towards this great end, the conversion of sinners and unbelievers, and thereby acquire grace for your own soul.

himself to an experienced spiritual director, following his instructions in all things; finally, he must now devote himself as fervently to the honor of God and of virtue as he was previously attached to the world, the flesh, and everything evil, and never permit himself to be turned from the right way, either by persecution or by mockery.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xix. 27—29.) At that time: Peter said to Jesus: Behold, we have left all things, and have followed thee: what therefore shall we have? And Jesus said to them: Amen, I say to you, that you who have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the seat of his majesty, you also shall sit on twelve seats judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall possess life everlasting.

Why is this gospel read to-day?

Because, although St. Paul did not follow Christ, while He was yet living on earth, he was called to the apostleship by Christ Himself, and, like the rest of the apostles, left everything to follow Christ, and labored and endured even more than the others in the propagation of the gospel. He will, therefore, with the rest of the apostles come with Christ, to judge not only the world, but even the fallen angels. He is, therefore, venerated by the Church in connection with St. Peter as a prince of the apostles.

How did Peter and the other apostles leave all, since they had but little to leave?

This St. Gregory thus explains: "We must consider the inclination and love for a thing more than the value of the thing itself." Although Peter possessed but little, he gave up all inclination for that little and, therefore, he left much; for St. Bernard says: "He leaves much who yields up the will to possess." This St. Peter did. But he who leaves honors and riches and everything for God, and yet retains the desire for them, gives up but little and has no merit in the abnegation. So likewise every one of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth, that is, all inclination for it, cannot be my disciple. (*Luke* xiv. 33.)

Why did Peter ask a reward?

This may have been done out of selfinterest (for the apostles were not yet free from every imperfection), but Christ permitted the question and made it the occasion to announce the reward which would be given to those who sincerely follow Him.

Why did Christ promise the apostles, that they should sit in judgment with Him?

To encourage them to perseverance in following Him, and in bravely bearing disgrace and persecution from the world; to let it be known to them and to all who adhere to Christ in poverty and humiliation, what exaltation will be given them at the end of the world; to show the followers of this world who regard Christ's adherents as most foolish, the folly and madness of their judgment, for which they themselves will be condemned.

Why does Christ, since he commands us to love our parents and relations, promise us a reward for leaving them?

This does not interfere with the command to love them in so far as they are our parents, but, as St. Gregory says, "only in so far as they are obstacles in the way to God and our salvation;" we must shun and avoid them, that is, we are not required to follow them, if they advise or command us to do anything which is contrary to God's commandments or injurious to our salvation.

What is understood by the hundredfold which Christ promises in return for temporal possessions?

St. Jerome explains it to mean the spiritual benefits, the grace of God, the virtues, the interior consolation and satisfaction which are a hundredfold, that is, infinitely more valuable than temporal riches. O how small and trivial is that which we leave and of which death would, in any event, deprive us, for the love of God! How indescribably great are the treasures which God in this life and in the next gives in return! Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him. (i. *Cor.* ii. 9.)

SUPPLICATION TO ST. PAUL. O great Apostle, St. Paul, whom the voice of the Lord cast to the ground, that thou mightest arise to true penance, and who thus from being a vessel of dishonor became a vessel of election, from being the enemy of Christ was changed into His most faithful defender and friend, I beseech thee to ask the grace from Christ for me, that I may now rightly know and love Him whose enemy I have been, and by my sins have crucified; that I may follow him and according to thy example as zealously practise justice as I have hitherto practised malice, so that I may obtain equal salvation with thee. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, &c. Amen.

INSTRUCTION
FOR THE FEAST OF THE PURIFICATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY,
COMMONLY CALLED CANDLEMAS DAY.

[February 2.]

What is this festival?

IT is the festival on which the Church venerates the humility and obedience of Mary and her divine Son, by which she subjected herself, although not obliged to do so, to the law of Moses, requiring purification and presentation in the temple. From this comes the name the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary or the Presentation of Jesus in the temple. It is also called Candlemas, because before Mass on this day the candles used in divine service are blessed, a procession then being formed, in which hymns sung, and the candles carried.

Why are the candles blessed on this day and carried in procession?

In remembrance of the presentation of Jesus to His Heavenly Father on this day, when the aged Simeon called Him: A light to the revelation of the gentiles, and the glory of the people Israel (*Luke* ii. 32.), and to remind us that, like the five wise virgins, we should go to meet Christ with the burning light of faith and good works.

With what intention are the candles blessed?

With the intention of obtaining that, by their pious use and the prayers of those who devoutly carry them, God may be moved to hear us and preserve us in health of body and soul; that our hearts through the doctrine of Jesus and the grace of the Holy Ghost, may be interiorly enlightened; and that the fire of the love of God may be kindled in our hearts, purify them from all remains of sin, and make us, some day, take part in the joyous light of heaven, which will never be extinguished.

The Introit sung in the Mass is from Psalm xlvii.: We have received thy mercy, O God, in the midst of thy temple: according to thy name, so also is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of justice. Great is the Lord and exceedingly to be praised, in the city of our God, on his holy mountain. Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O Almighty and Eternal God, we humbly beseech Thy divine majesty that as Thy only Son in the substance of our flesh, was this day presented in

the temple, so our souls, being perfectly cleansed, may become a pure oblation and presented to Thee. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Mal.* iii. 1—4.) THUS SAITH THE LORD GOD: Behold, I send my angel, and he shall prepare the way before my face. And presently the Lord whom you seek, and the angel of the Testament whom you desire, shall come to his temple. Behold, he cometh, saith the Lord of hosts: and who shall be able to think of the day of his coming? and who shall stand to see him? For he is like a refining fire, and like the fuller's herb: and he shall sit refining and cleansing the silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and shall refine them as gold, and as silver, and they shall offer sacrifices to the Lord in justice. And the sacrifice of Judea and Jerusalem shall please the Lord, as in the days of old, and in the ancient years: saith the Lord Almighty.

EXPLANATION. The angel or messenger who shall prepare the way for the Lord, is John the Baptist (*Matt.* xi. 10.), and the long desired Ruler and Messiah is Christ, who on this day came into the temple. Christ is called the Angel of the Testament, because He has arranged between God and man a new and far more excellent covenant than God had made with the Jews; for He did not supply the Christians, as He had the Jews, with temporal, but with heavenly and eternal riches. This Angel of the Testament, Christ, came the first time in all the humility of a little child into the temple, but His second coming at the end of the world, the time of which will be known no one, will be terrible. The prophet likens Him to a fire which purifies the gold, and to that herb with which cloth is whitened in the fuller's machine; under which figures he alludes to the strength of judgment, with which Christ will judge the just and the unjust. Pure as refined gold, and as the white linen (corporal) on which the Body of Christ is laid in the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, must be the heart of those who receive Christ in the blessed Sacrament, or seek to worthily offer the holy Sacrifice with the priest.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* ii. 22—32.) AT THAT TIME: After the days of the purification of Mary, according to the law of Moses, were accomplished, they carried Jesus to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord. As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male opening the womb shall be called holy to the Lord. And to offer a sacrifice according as it is written in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons. And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem

named Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was in him. And he had received an answer from the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. And he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when his parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the law, he also took him into his arms, and blessed God, and said: Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word, in peace. Because my eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared be-

fore the face of all peoples: a light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

Why was Jesus brought into the temple of Jerusalem?

That our Lord might be presented, that is, offered up to God; for God had commanded the Jews to offer their first born sons to Him, and to redeem them afterwards at a price, in grateful commemoration of the destroying angel's having spared their first born at the departure from Egypt, when all the first born of the Egyptians were slain. (*Lev.* xiii. 13.)

How soon after birth must this take place?

On the fortieth day, for according to the law the mother's impurity lasted for this length of time after the birth of the boy, after which she went to the temple, and in order to be declared purified, made her offering of purification. (*Lev.* xii.)

Was Mary subject to this law of purification?

No, for she had not, like other mothers, conceived and born in sin, and, therefore, did not need purification; but she placed herself with her divine child among sinners and fulfilled the law by which these were bound. "Nothing," says St. Bernard, "was impure in her conception, nothing impure in her birth; there was nothing to be cleansed, for the child itself was the origin of all purity, and came into the world to purify it from sin. Truly, O happy Virgin, thou didst need no purification, but thou wouldst pass as a woman among women, as thy Son also passed for a child among children."

Why did Mary fulfil the law of purification?

She did this in order, like her divine Son, to give us an example of obedience and true humility, for she interiorly thought little of herself and wished externally to be so regarded; to teach us to thank God for the favors He has shown to our ancestors, for the law of the Jews was given them to encourage to gratitude for the preservation of the first born of their ancestors from the hands of the destroying angel (*Lev.* xiii. 13.); and in order not to scandalize, by omission of this law, those who did not know, that she was not required to observe it.

Learn, O Christian, from Mary's example to be truly humble and obedient, to be grateful to God for the benefits which your ancestors, parents have received, and to be on your guard, never to give scandal by failing to observe the commandments of God and His Church.

Why did not Mary offer a lamb as did the rich (*Lev.* xii. 6.), *but merely, like the poor, a pair of doves?*

Because she was poor, and was not ashamed to appear as such before the world. O how Mary loved humility and the poverty connected with it! Take no shame to thyself, therefore, if thou

art poor, love poverty the more; but if rich, be poor in spirit, and love the poor and the distressed.

How did it come to pass, that Simeon met the Saviour in the temple?

Because he was a pious and faithful servant of God, it had been promised him, that he should not die, until he had seen the Saviour. When Jesus was brought into the temple, Simeon was inspired by God to go there also, and when he found Jesus there, he by divine inspiration knew Him to be the Messiah and gave testimony of Him.

See how God rewards those who sincerely love and serve Him, giving Himself to them to be known always more and more!

Why was Simeon ready to die, when he had held Jesus in his arms?

Because his wish was perfectly fulfilled; for since he had not only seen with his own eyes, but had held in his arms the Desired of all nations, for whom the patriarchs had so vainly longed, what more could he wish than to leave this miserable world, and commend his spirit to the hands of his Saviour?

Why did Simeon call Jesus a light for the revelation of the gentiles?

Because Jesus had come into the world as the true light (*John* i.), which was to free the gentiles from the darkness of superstition and idolatry, and from the blindness and slavery of Satan, as well as to conduct the Jews out of the bondage of the Mosaic Law in the liberty of the children of God. (Gal. iv.)

PRAYER. Heavenly Father! look down from Thy throne of mercy upon the face of Thy Anointed in whom Thou art well pleased. Behold, He is this day offered to Thee in the temples for the sins of His brethren. Let this offering please Thee, and move Thee to have compassion on us sinners. In consideration of His humility and obedience, forgive us our pride and disobedience, and grant us, that purified by His blood, we may one day, having like Simeon departed this life in peace, behold Thee as the eternal light which shall never be extinguished in the temple of Thy glory, be presented to Thee by Mary, our beloved Mother, and love and praise Thee forever. Amen.

INSTRUCTION ON CHILD BIRTH.

The law of purification (*Ler.* xii.), by which the Jewish women for forty days after the birth of a boy, and for eighty after that of a girl, were regarded as impure and kept out of the temple, and required, at the end of that time, to bring a lamb and a dove to the temple as an offering for sin, and be by the prayer of the priest pronounced pure, does not, it is true, apply

to Christian women, because the Church has abolished the Jewish ceremonies: but the Church, nevertheless, permits them to remain absent from Church, with a good conscience, for six weeks or so long as circumstances may require, after the birth of a child, in order to take care of their health. This should be remembered by husbands who should see, that their wives have the necessary quiet and attendance which nature requires for recovery after the birth of a child. The Church desires, that at the end of this time the mother and child, following Mary's example, should resort to the Church to obtain the blessing of the priest, thank God for their deliverance, offer the child to God, praying with the priest for the grace to bring up the child in sanctity and piety. This comprises the Churching of women, which is a very old and praiseworthy custom and should not be neglected. Nevertheless there is no necessity for a woman to remain constantly in her room or even in the house until she is churched, for fear of injury from evil spirits. This is a most foolish fear; for evil spirits will not and cannot harm her, if she does not injure herself by work, improper food, or by neglecting to ask God's protection. The delicate health of women and of children, comes generally from the proper precautions not having been taken, from their not having been rightly attended to, and so having hurt themselves.

At the Churching they should direct their prayers to the ends already mentioned, gratefully offer to God the divine Lamb Jesus Christ by hearing Mass or receiving holy Communion, give an alms, and perhaps say the following

PRAYER. Almighty and beneficent God! who didst impose upon our mother Eve, in punishment for her sin, that she should give birth to her children in pain: I offer to Thee all the pains which I have thus suffered in atonement for my sins, and thank Thee, that I have safely brought a child into the world, whom I now offer to Thee, according to the example of the Mother of Thine only begotten Son, for Thy holy service, whom I shall zealously endeavor to educate for Thy honor. Give me but this grace through the intercession and merits of this most blessed Mother. Bless me and my child, and grant, that we may here live in accordance with Thy divine will, and receive eternal salvation there. Through Christ, our Lord, &c. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. BLASE, BISHOP AND MARTYR.

[February 3.]

T. Blase was born at Sebaste in Armenia. In his youth he gave himself with great zeal to the study of philosophy and medicine, but at the same time did not forget his soul. He followed Christ in beautiful virtues, especially in meekness and humility, and kept from all sinful ways of the world. Although his life was a hidden one, the inhabitants of Sebaste knew it and chose him for their bishop. At that time, the Christians, especially the bishops and priests, suffered many persecutions from the pagans, persecutions from which Sebaste did not escape. That his life might be saved for his flock, Blase withdrew to a grotto in Mount Agaeus, where he led a most penitent life, and entirely destroyed the old man in himself. If one puts off the old man and puts on Christ, that is, if one masters his corrupt nature, subdues his evil inclinations, and sweeps out everything earthly from himself, then his course of life becomes a heavenly one, and he becomes master over the earthly, the material life, so that all nature is his friend and servant. So it was with Blase. The animals of the forests became his friends and served him; they approached him with confidence, permitted themselves to be carressed by him, had their wounds healed by him, received his blessing, brought him food, and obeyed his voice. A hunter one day met him in the midst of these animals, and forthwith reported the saintly man to the governor, who sent his officers to apprehend him. Blase went cordially to meet them, and when they reached the door of his cave, he said: "You are welcome, for now I see that God has not forgotten me." When they were returning with him, the animals followed, and the officers terrified would have fled, but Blase reassured them: "Be not afraid," he said, "they will do you no harm," and ordered the animals to go back. They obeyed, but for a long time looked sadly after him. Many people came on the road to see the saint and to ask his blessing; among them a woman who held in her arms a child in whose throat a fishbone was sticking. She was inconsolable and cried out to the saint: "O dearest master, help my child, or it will be strangled!" The saint knelt down, prayed, blessed the child with the sign of the cross, and it was immediately cured.

When the saint had reached the city, he was taken before the governor who ordered him to worship the gods. Refusing to do this, he was struck with clubs; while thus tortured, he said to the governor: "Do you indeed fancy, that by torture you can force me to forsake my Lord and my God? You are indeed wrong, no

pain shall separate me from my Jesus." The governor, then, was so enraged, that he had him bound to a pillar and torn into pieces by iron claws. Blase calmly looking up to heaven, suffered all without uttering a single moan. He was then taken to prison, where the governor let him remain for a time. Once more called to the judgment seat, the saint again firmly refused to offer to idols, and the governor then ordered, that he should be beheaded.

The Church venerates his memory on the third of February, and after Mass connects with it the custom of placing two burning candles crosswise and touching with them the neck of the faithful, while the priest says: "Through the intercession of the holy bishop and martyr Blase, may the Lord preserve thee from every disease of the throat, in the name † of the Father, † of the Son, † and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." This is founded in the very ancient custom of invoking and venerating St. Blase as patron in all diseases of the throat.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who, by the yearly solemnity of blessed Blase Thy Martyr and Bishop, rejoicest the hearts of Thy faithful; mercifully grant that we who celebrate his martyrdom, may enjoy his protection. Thro'.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. MATTHIAS, APOSTLE.

[February 24. or 25.]

MAtthias, born in Bethlehem of Juda, was at the commencement of Christ's preaching numbered by Him among the seventy two disciples, and everywhere accompanied our Saviour and witnessed all His miracles and His resurrection. After Christ's ascension, Matthias was chosen apostle in place of the traitor Judas, as is detailed in the Lesson for this day, and after the descent of the Holy Ghost announced the gospel first to his own people, the Jews, and then in Cappadocia and the neighborhood of the Caspian Sea. After having preached the doctrine of salvation in many countries, especially urging, as St. Clement of Alexandria relates, abstinence from carnal pleasures, he was stoned by the Jews in Galilee who wished not to hear his sermons, and was finally beheaded by the Roman soldiers about the year 63.

[For the Introit see the Feast of St. Andrew.]

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who didst add blessed Matthias to the number of Thy Apostles, grant, we be-

seech thee, that by his prayers we may be ever sensible of the effects of thy mercy. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Acts* i. 15—26.) In those days: Peter rising up in the midst of the brethren, said: (now the number of persons together was about an hundred and twenty.) Men brethren, the scripture must needs be fulfilled which the Holy Ghost spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who was the leader of them that apprehended Jesus: who was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. And he indeed hath possessed a field of the reward of iniquity, and being hanged, burst asunder in the midst: and all his bowels gushed out. And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem: so that the same field was called in their tongue Haceldama, that is to say, the field of blood. For it is written in the book of Psalms: Let their habitation become desolate, and let there be none to dwell therein. And his bishopric let another take. Wherefore of these men who have companied with us, all the time that the Lord Jesus came in and went out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day wherein he was taken up from us, one of these must be made a witness with us of his resurrection. And they appointed two, Joseph, called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And praying they said: Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, to take the place of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas hath by transgression fallen, that he might go to his own place. And they gave them lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

How did Judas possess a field?

By the reward of his treason. Repenting of his crime Judas threw it down in the temple; the high priests would not accept it for the treasury of the temple, because it was the price of blood, and it was, therefore, used to purchase a field to be a burial place for strangers dying in Jerusalem, and received the name Haceldama, the field of the blood. (*Matt.* xxvii. 3.)

See how much avarice profited Judas, and learn from his miserable fate the danger of avarice and all other passions which are not immediately exterminated.

INSTRUCTION. Let us learn from the apostles who prayed so fervently at this election, the necessity of prayer in the election

of priests or rulers of the state, that God may so direct us, that the choice may fall on men who are really suitable for the office. The neglect of prayer, and the carnal, selfish considerations which move many electors, often cause men to be chosen who administer their office badly, and do more harm than good. If the choice is not directed by God, as it was in the case of St. Matthias, but according to human sentiments, then, generally, instead of a Matthias a Judas is chosen. From this that no one of the disciples presented himself as a candidate for apostleship, we should learn not to force ourselves into spiritual office and dignity, but await the call of God, because we dare not promise ourselves the grace necessary to fulfil its duties. All who are about choosing their state of life, must remember to pray fervently for light, that they may know the state for which God designs them; for we can be saved only in that station in life which we have entered in compliance with the will of God, and not from the promptings of sinful passions.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xi. 25—30.) At that time: Jesus answered and said: I confess to thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones. Yea, Father; for so it hath seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered to me by my Father. And no one knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither doth any one know the Father but the Son, and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal him. Come to me, all you that labour, and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take up my yoke upon you, and learn of me, because I am meek, and humble of heart: and you shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is sweet, and my burden light.

Why did Christ say: I confess to thee, O Father, because thou hadst hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones?

By this He means to give thanks to His Heavenly Father for having revealed the mysteries of His incarnation and humiliation in life, not to those who wish in their pride to penetrate everything with their short sighted human reason and therefore despise the mysterious works of God, but to the little, that is, the humble ones, who, like the apostles, make their reasoning obedient to the service of Christ and the faith, and so become worthy to be interiorly enlightened by God, like the apostles, and to understand His mysteries.

How were all things delivered by the Father to Christ?

By making Christ, since He sent Him into the world, the Teacher and Model of kings and rulers, the Redeemer and the Judge of all men, and giving Him all power in heaven and on earth. (*Matt.* xxviii. 18.)

Why is it, that no one knows the Father but the Son and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal him?

Because no one but the God-Man, Christ, knows perfectly the incomprehensible mystery of the Most Holy Trinity, and no one can acquire the knowledge of God and the true faith, except through Christ.

Why does no one know the Son but the Father?

Because only God can comprehend the eternal birth and the origin of Christ, as regards His divinity, His divine perfections and attributes, and the mystery of the redemption.

Who are those who labor and are burdened?

They are: all who labor for justice and strive to attain perfection; who are obliged to endure persecution and annoyance, and those who are weighed down with the burden of grievous sins.

How does Christ refresh them?

By His grace He refreshes the first, that they may attain justice; the second He consoles and strengthens, that they may not become faint-hearted; the last He forgives (if they do penance), remits their punishment, and so relieves them of their burden.

What is the yoke of Christ?

It is the light yoke of the commandment to love God and our neighbor.

What have we principally to learn of Christ?

To be meek and humble of heart. We are meek, when, after Christ's example, we bear injuries patiently, and do not avenge them; and humble of heart, if we acknowledge our weakness and unworthiness, have a poor opinion of ourselves, and seek not to be esteemed by others, as St. Bonaventura says, "if we despise ourselves and the world, but no person in it, and are glad to be ourselves disregarded." This, Christ tells us, is the only way to true peace of mind, and to temporal and eternal happiness; to leave this path for one of anger and pride, is to lose the road to heaven.

PRAYER. O most meek and humble Jesus! we thank Thee for Thy loving invitation to us who labor and are burdened, promising us rest and refreshment, and we beseech Thee to grant, that in all trials and difficulties we may shelter ourselves with Thee, and become by meekness and humility less unworthy of Thy refreshing consolation.

ON THE OBSERVANCE OF THE COMMANDMENTS.

My yoke is sweet and my burden light. (*Matt.* xi. 30.)

Can we keep the commandments?

Assuredly, with God's grace which Christ has obtained for us and continually offers us, we can keep the commandments. If we could not, the yoke of Christ would be not sweet, but inendurable, and St. John could not with truth have said: The commandments of God are not hard. (*John* v. 3.) If the commandments were really as hard to keep as some sacrilegiously declare, then God would have been unjust and unwise, for He would have imposed upon men laws that could not be fulfilled, and for the non-fulfilment of which He threatens to punish them. But God requires nothing that is impossible. "The law," writes St. Augustine, "is given us, that we may seek for grace, and grace is given us, that we may fulfil the law, and whatever God demands He gives grace to perform," because "He encourages us, by His commands, to do what we can and pray for that which we cannot do, for because He helps us, we can." (*Conc. Trid. Sess.* 6. *c.* 11.)

Can we not be saved without observing the commandments?

No, for Christ expressly says: If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. (*Matt.* xix. 17.) It is to be observed, that Christ says: If thou wilt, He wishes not to force any one; He requires, that we come voluntarily; he shows us the way and gives us help to follow it. So He says: "Take my yoke upon you! I impose it not against your will. Take it for yourself, but otherwise you will find not rest for your soul, but misery."

PRAYER TO ST. MATTHIAS. O saint Matthias, glorious Apostle and Martyr of Jesus Christ, who so urged to abstinence and the keeping of the commandments, I beseech thee who wast chosen by God from all eternity to obtain from Him the grace for us, that by the keeping of the commandments, by mortification, and good works, we may be numbered among the chosen ones. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, &c. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. PATRICK,

BISHOP AND APOSTLE OF IRELAND.

[March 17.]

T. Patrick was born about the year 415 at Bonaven Taberniae, a village of Britain, probably the present Kilpatrick in Scotland. His father Calpurnius was of a noble Roman family, his mother Concessa was a relation of St. Martin, Bishop of Tours. Patrick remained until his fifteenth year in his father's house and then, as he says himself in a book entitled Confession, and written towards the end of his life, God was pleased to lead him to his high vocation through a very painful and laborious preparatory school.

In those remote times Ireland was a mountainous, inhospitable country, covered all over with forests, bogs and morasses. Her inhabitants were wild and unpolished, lived by war and robbery; only a few of them had some little knowledge of the true God. The Britons, on the contrary, under the sway of the Romans were already imbued with a certain degree of culture and had adopted the Christian Faith. The Irish, however, were hardier warriors than the effemminate Britons; in their naval expeditions they visited the shores of England, landed here and there, attacked villages and unfortified towns, sacked them, and carried the inhabitants into slavery. A swarm of rapacious Irish, assailed a manor belonging to Calphurnius, and cut down the domestics who attempted to resist. The parents were absent, but young Patrick and a number of the male servants were made prisoners and carried over to Ireland. From this day the son of Calphurnius, hitherto accustomed to every comfort of a wealthy home, entered upon a long and severe noviciate of six years. Slave to a coarse barbarian he had to drive his master's cattle into the woods, to guard and feed them; not seldom he must spend, unsheltered, whole nights among bogs and marshes; he was often cruelly beaten. Thus engaged in an endless struggle against hunger and thirst, heat and frost, deprived of every earthly consolation, and of every hope of deliverance, St. Patrick was taught by his misfortunes, to turn his eyes towards heaven, and in fervent prayers to have recourse to God and His blessed Providence, which always knows and possesses the means to console those, who lovingly confide in it. St. Patrick now commenced a new life; a celestial light now illumined his soul, and warmed his heart. He now examined his past life; the sorrow for having squandered so many years by not perfectly loving God, drew the most bitter tears from his eyes. Even towards the end of his pilgrimage, as the Saint himself avows in his book of Confession, every day he

still bewailed that time of his youth not devoted to God. Humble and resigned he henceforth suffered all in a spirit of penance, and with confidence in the goodness of God awaited the hour of his delivery.

At length, after a severe trial of six years, this hour struck for Patrick. In a dream he was ordered to leave his master's house and go to the sea shore; there he would find a vessel ready to take him on board. Patrick obeyed; after a travel of several days he arrived at the very spot on the shore shown him in the dream, and there found a vessel going to start. But, unfortunately, Patrick had no money to pay for his passage, and in spite of all prayers the master of the ship refused to take him. Deeply afflicted Patrick was about to return to his master, but he had scarcely made several steps, when the owner became good-humored', recalled Patrick and took him on board.

After a favorable voyage they landed on the shore of Northern Scotland, a desert wilderness in which they wandered about, discovering nowhere a human abode. Their provisions had all gone out. Patrick's companions were yet heathens; already on board he had told them of the God of the Christians and of His infinite love. Almost starving, they now, reminded Patrick of his words and besought him to implore his God. For if the Christians God, they said, is really almighty and merciful, he both can and will save us from starvation. Patrick penetrated by a lively faith, resolutely promised them the approach of delivery within an hour, in case of their sincere conversion to the true God. He was immediately absorbed in silent prayer, and no sooner had this hour elapsed, than they encountered a considerable number of wild hogs; some of these being hunted gave them sufficient meat to complete their travel of 24 days.

Patrick's patience however was subjected to another hard trial. Though his pagan companions had witnessed, how soon Patrick's prayer was heard, yet before eating they sacrificed all the flesh to their idols; this forced Patrick to abhor all such meat and rather to suffer the most fearful hunger than defile himself. He was afflicted less by his own hunger and thirst than at the incomprehensible spiritual blindness of these heathens, who in spite of an evident miracle would not desist from their idolatry. Finally, after many days of suffering Patrick happily came to his home; where, however, he enjoyed only a short repose. He was for a second and third made prisoner, but these times he was soon delivered.

After God had by this long course of sufferings prepared His servant for the high vocation of being Ireland's guide to the only saving faith, He now called Patrick to the priesthood. Being once absorbed in prayer Patrick, in a vision, saw himself carried over to Ireland and there beheld a numberless crowd of children, who with lamentable cries came forth from the maternal wombs and stretched out their hands for help. In another vision he heard

voices from the western shore, which cried out to him: "Come, we beseech thee, walk among us."

Patrick resolved to obey this heavenly call; but he had no more than uttered his purpose, when he was opposed from all sides, and above all by his parents, who almost persuaded him to give up his pious project. Then, however God Himself, in a series of wonderful apparitions revealed to Patrick His unmistakable and adorable will. These strenghtened Patrick's resolution, so that he would not be kept back by any obstacle; he became firmly determined to go to Ireland in order to bear salvation to her people. Not one would accompany him to the work of saving those poor, neglected souls; he caused therefore himself to be consecrated bishop, that he might afterwards ordain such Irish converts, as by zeal and science should be qualified to be his fellow-laborers. After overcoming many hindrances Patrick was at length consecrated bishop; now he left all, his native country, his parents and relations, to embark for the northernmost border of the then known world, to spread the light of the Gospel. With the zeal of an Apostle he was ready to undergo for the sake of Jesus all sorts of dangers, even tortures and martyrdom, most fervently thanking God for having enabled him during a six years captivity to acquire the Irish language, as he thus could preach to them the Doctrine of the Cross in their own mother-tongue.

Indeed the blessings which followed every step of St. Patrick were exceeding and inexpressible. Whithersoever he came, the people flocked together and, as it were, clung to the lips of the saintly preacher; hunters and warriors, at other times untamed and cold of sentiment, were changed into tame, calm and obedient lambs, and at the close of each sermon all would stretch forth their arms towards him, beseeching him for the holy Sacrament of Baptism. But St. Patrick would by no means baptize them before they were sufficiently instructed in every article of the Faith; and now the Irish proved how eager they were to learn the true Faith, as they were ever unwearied in listening to him. Like unto a second St. Paul did also St. Patrick preach from morning to the very dark.

The Saint, however, upon seeing the great success of his apostolic sermons, so evidently assisted by Heaven, now determined to provide this Vineyard of Christ with its necessary laborers. To this purpose he selected such converts of each district, as shewed themselves sufficiently zealous and educated, and by the imposition of his episcopal hands ordained them acolyths, deacons and priests.

To this young Irish clergy, as also to the prospering parishes St. Patrick carefully imparted all good counsel and directed them wisely, at the same time erecting churches in all parts of the country. After St. Patrick had already labored upon this Island, Britain at length remembered him, and sent to him two fellow-

laborers, the bishops Auxentius and Iserinus, whose aid the saint most joyfully accepted. He immediately went about erecting a number of Irish Episcopal seats, to which he gave intelligent and pious bishops.

Nor even did it suffice the Apostle of Ireland to strengthen and fortify those already converted in their faith; nay, he moreover wished to lead them upon the very path of christian perfection. Thus he taught young widows to devote their lives to abstinence; he persuaded young, tender maids to transform their bodies into living temples of God by preserving their precious purity unsullied; he moreover encouraged wealthy youths to lavish their riches upon the needy and to follow Jesus with free and undivided hearts. No sooner had the Saint commenced to guide people on this way of perfection, than he experienced the exceeding consolation of seeing those, who embraced this seemingly rough, but actually delightful state, increase to such a number, as allowed him to erect monasteries for both sexes. One day he baptized a young girl of exceedingly beautiful form, and scarcely sixteen years of age. A few days after, the girl returned to St. Patrick indicating to him an apparition to her (probably of her guardian angel) in which she was taught, that it would be agreeable to God, if she would devote her life exclusively to Him. The Saint saw her heart and recognized this to be her very vocation,—she thus as a bride to Jesus obtained the sacred veil at the hands of St. Patrick.

Our Saint had already reached an advanced age; at the close of his life he had the soothing consolation to see nearly all Ireland adoring the Crucified, whom he incessantly preached to them. Indeed he knew no treasure on earth more precious and dear to him, than his flock, which he had purchased with so many sufferings and grievances. Day and night did he then watch over this cherised flock, never ceasing to pray for the grace of perseverance on the part of his converts. And truly, no other country ever after manifested the blessed influence of Holy Religion more perseveringly than Ireland. For, before St. Patrick had there preached the Gospel, the whole nation was sunk into a deplorable barbarism, grovelling in a miserable state of life, whilst the selfsame people half a century after its saintly Apostle's death rivalled every civilized nation. Every church and monastery he provided with excellent schools; their great and celebrated masters reared scholars equally great and celebrated; so that in the course of several centuries men flocked to Ireland from all parts, there to still their thirst for knowledge, there to cultivate their minds and to receive the Doctrines of Salvation at a font, which they well knew to be pure and unstained. In fact Ireland became the school of Saints, so that she even deserved to be styled "Isle of the Saints". Numerous Irish, as for instance Sts. Columban, Gallus, Fridolin, Chilian and others started out for France and Germany, there also to propagate the true Faith.

St. Patrick died at a very high age. His body, originally deposited in a church at Down, which was at a later period dedicated to the Saint himself, was discovered in the year 1185. The Irish, whose ancestors were gained to Jesus Christ, and the Isle itself, where he overturned and abolished the low worship of idols, thenceforth remained signally under the happy, blessed influence of the Saint; for although Luther's unhappy heresy entered into Great Britain, causing a great havoc among its people deluded by the false gospel, yet Ireland, despite all persecutions and oppressions, stood faithful and undaunted to the banner of the Old Catholic Church. Down to the present day, every Irish heart remembers St. Patrick, its champion and patron, with sentiments of singular gratitude and devotedness.

At the Introit of the Mass the Church says: The Lord made to him a covenant of peace, and made him a prince, that the dignity of the priesthood should be to him forever. (*Eccl.* xlv.) O Lord, remember David and all his meekness. (*Ps.* cxxxi.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who hast vouchsafed to send Thy Confessor and Bishop, the blessed Patrick; to announce Thy glory to the nations, grant us through his merits and intercession, that with Thy mercy we be enabled to perform, what Thou commandest us to do. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Eccl.* xliv. xlv.) Behold, a great priest, who in his days pleased God and was found just, and in the time of wrath he was made a reconciliation. There was not found the like to him who preserved the law of the Most High. Therefore by an oath the Lord gave him glory in his posterity. He gave him the blessing of all nations, and confirmed his covenant upon his head. He acknowledged him in his blessings, he preserved for him his mercy: and he found grace before the eyes of the Lord. He glorified him in the sight of kings, and gave him a crown of glory. He made an everlasting covenant with him, and gave him the great priesthood, and made him blessed in glory. To execute the office of the priesthood, and to have praise in his name, and to offer him due incense for an odor of sweetness.

EXPLANATION. The text of this instruction or lesson refers to the great and holy men of the Old Law, as to Enoch, Noe, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron. They merit to be taken as models of christian perfection, and actually were imitated as such by the holy bishops of our mother the Church, wherefore God in His mercy showered upon them His graces

and exalted them above the powerful of this earth, as we see in St. Patrick, and crowned them with the diadem of eternal glory. The praise of the Almighty was continually on the lips of St. Patrick and the incense of prayer and good work daily ascended to His throne, wherefore God also in return blessed him with honors in heaven and on earth.

[Gospel according to St. Matthew. See the Feast of St. Nicholas, December 6.]

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. JOSEPH.

[March 19.]

T. Joseph who, was of the royal blood of David, was a carpenter in Nazareth of Galilee, where he was espoused to the blessed Virgin Mary. His greatest praise is this, that the gospel calls him a just man, that he was chosen by God from all men of his time to be the fosterfather of His Son, and that Jesus until His thirtieth year was subject to him. The history of his childhood and youth, has not been preserved, and of it, as of the rest of his life, we know only that which is related by the evangelists. As we do not read, that he was present at the marriage in Cana, it is supposed, that before the commencement of Christ's ministry he died a happy death in the arms of Jesus and Mary.

The Introit of the Mass reads: The just shall flourish like the palm-tree: he shall grow up like the cedar of Libanus, planted in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God. It is good to give praise to the Lord: and to sing to thy praise, O Most High! (*Ps.* xli.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that we may be assisted by the merits of the spouse of Thy most Holy Virgin Mother, and that what we cannot obtain through our own weakness, may be granted us by his prayers. Who.

LESSON. (*Eccl.* xlv. 1—6.) This saint was beloved of God and men: whose memory is in benediction. He made him like the saints in glory, and magnified him in the fear of his enemies. And with his words he made prodigies to cease. He glorified him in the sight of kings, and gave him commandments in the sight of his people, and shewed him

his glory. He sanctified him in his faith and meekness, and chose him out of all flesh. For he heard him and his voice, and brought him into a cloud. And he gave him commandments before his face, and a law of life and instruction.

APPLICATION. What is here said of Moses, may be justly applied to St. Joseph, for which reason the Church chooses this lesson for his festival day. That St. Joseph was beloved of God, is shown by his being chosen the fosterfather of the

Son of God, Jesus Christ; his memory is in benediction, and how could his memory but be blessed, who was the fosterfather of Him who from the commencement of the world, as its Creator, blessed all creatures, and who, by His death, as Redeemer, procured blessings and graces for us who, on account of our sins, deserved the curse of God? God has placed St. Joseph with the saints, and glorified him before all kings, for he was not only of royal blood, but he was fosterfather to the King of kings. His humility, his purity, and his faithful love of Mary enabled him to hear for thirty years the tender voice of Jesus; God has also brought him into a cloud, that is, taken him up to heaven, where he now sees Him face to face, and is a most powerful intercessor for man.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* i. 18—21.) When Mary, the mother of Jesus, was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Whereupon Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing publicly to expose her, was minded to put her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared to him in his sleep, saying: Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. For he shall save his people from their sins.

Why was the blessed Virgin espoused to St. Joseph?

St. Jerome gives these answers to this question: that by Joseph's descent from David the descent of Mary and Jesus might be proved, for in the Old Law a woman was not permitted, to marry out of her own tribe, when there were no male heirs; that Mary might not be stoned as she would have been, if found unmarried with child; that Christ should not be regarded as an illegitimate child and be, therefore, abused and repudiated; and that, as St. Ignatius, the Martyr, says, the birth of Christ thus might remain concealed from the devil who believed, that Christ was not to be born from a virgin but from a wife; finally, that Mary might have consolation and assistance, as at the time of the flight with Jesus into Egypt.

Why did St. Joseph wish to leave Mary privately?

Because he was not instructed concerning the divine mysteries, and could not from her pure, blameless life understand Mary's condition, and was too full of love to think or assert evil of her, or put her to shame.

Why did Mary not reveal these mysteries to him?

Because of the humility which she loved so much, that she would rather suffer evil suspicions than reveal the great grace which God had shown her, besides which she also trusted, that God Himself would care for her and make her innocence manifest.

ON THE VENERATION OF ST. JOSEPH.

"The example of Christ," as St. Alphonsus of Ligouri writes, "who so highly venerated St. Joseph while on earth, and who was during His whole life obedient to him, should suffice to inspire all hearts with devotion to this great saint;" and he whom the King of kings placed so high, indeed deserves especial veneration from man. To encourage this veneration, St. Theresa wrote: "I do not remember, that I ever prayed to St. Joseph for anything which he did not procure for me; the great graces God has given me through him, and the many dangers of body and soul from which he has preserved me, are indeed truly wonderful. It seems as if God has given to other saints the grace to assist in some special manner those who seek their intercession; but of this glorious saint my experience is, that he assists in every need. The Lord appears to show by this, that as He was subject to him on earth, so in heaven He does every thing which St. Joseph requests of Him. Others, whom I have advised to have recourse to him, have experienced the same thing. I would gladly so advise every one." "I have a great devotion to this saint," continues St. Alphonsus, "because I have so often experienced, that he can obtain so much from God. For many years I have been accustomed to ask a special grace on his festival, and my prayer is always answered. As we must all die, we should all have a special devotion to St. Joseph, for all Catholics consider him as the patron of the dying, who assists, in the hour of death, those who have venerated him, and this for three reason: because Jesus loves him, not only as a friend, but as His father, on which account he is a more powerful intercessor than any other saint; because St. Joseph has a special power against evil spirits who attack us in the hour of death; for since he freed our Saviour from the snares of Herod, God has given him the power to guard the dying from the attacks of the devil; lastly the assistance which Jesus and Mary rendered him in the hour of his death, gives him the right to procure a sweet and holy death for his servants. If they, therefore, invoke him in the hour of death, he will not only aid them himself, but procure aid for them from Jesus and Mary." Should not these words of so great a saint encourage thee daily to honor St. Joseph? Should not this hope of being assisted in the hour of death by Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, move thee to devotion to the fosterfather of Christ?

PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH. O St. Joseph, Mary's pure bridegroom, who because of thy purity and love of justice wast chosen for the fosterfaster of Jesus Christ, do not leave me, I beseech thee, in my necessities and cares; ask for me the grace to live a just and pure life like thine, and grant, that I may obtain the happiness of dying, like thee, in the arms of Jesus and Mary. Amen.

THE HOLY ABBOT BENEDICT.

[March 21.]

That which our farmers and especially the first settlers do in our wild and uncultivated western regions, was once performed by the monks of St. Benedict within the domains of Northern Europe. They cleared the mighty forests which at that time afforded protection to the buffalo and the bear, they laid dry the marshes, changed wild plains into fruitful fields, they planted the vine and the noble fruittrees. They preserved the sciences which had fallen into disrepute; they stored up in their cloisters libraries of the ancient classics, which without the sons of St. Benedict would not only be lost to succeeding generations, but not even known as having once existed. They preserved the arts which were at the brink of perdition, erecting and impellishing those great piles scattered in so large a number over all Europe. They performed a still greater work: they subjected the Goths, the Saxons, the Marcomanni, the Alemanni &c. to the sweet yoke of the cross. Their value can never be sufficiently appreciated. Also in America the children of St. Benedict have established themselves, in order to diffuse also in that vast country the blessings of their holy founder.

Truly, St. Benedict was as his name indicates, a child of blessing.

He was born about the year 480 at Nursia in Italy. His parents sent him, when growing up, to Rome, that there he might be instructed in all the fine sciences. Benedict soon perceived the moral corruption of the Romans, and was seized by fear concerning his own innocence. In order to escape the enticements, he left Rome and sought his way into the mountains; thence he went to Subiaco, a day's journey distant from Rome, where he found a desert with inhospitable caverns in the mountain-cliffs. He had resolved to serve his God in solitude and retirement, and to acquire such virtues as would enable him to perform and undergo great labor for the Church and the welfare of his fellowbrethren.

On his way to the desert he met with a holy monk, named Romanus, to whom he revealed his intention. Romanus gladly approved of the design, promising him to keep his secret, and gave him a monk's garment. Benedict now chose for his dwelling-place an almost inaccessible narrow grotto at the foot of one of the mountain-cliffs. Romanus daily laid aside a portion of his bread, and secretly brought it to the young hermit, lowering it by means of a rope. The sound of a bell attached to the rope was to announce the arrival of the bread.

Benedict spent his whole time in prayer, until God who was with him, made manifest his chosen instrument. Shepherds, feeding their flocks in the vicinity, one day discovered him. At first they believed him to be a beast, because he was clad with the skin of a brute animal, also because he hid in the shrubs, when perceiving himself discovered. They approached him and found to their astonishment that he was a human being. Our saint addressed them in a friendly manner, and availed himself of the opportunity to impress upon their minds the important and holy doctrines of the Christian religion, and thus effected in many of them an entire change of life

In this way the holy man became known. In a very short time the inhabitants of the surrounding countries flocked around him, eager for their salvation. They listened with great attention to the saint's pious instructions, and were so moved and edified by them, that many relinquished the world and all its glory and confided themselves to his care. About this time it pleased God to visit our saint with a severe trial. Base phantoms and representations as also obscene emotions tormented him day and night. He, however overcame them by pious and fervent prayer and by an heroic act of selfcommand which was and will always be admired in him by all following generations; for when the demons already thought themselves victors, our saint undressed, threw himself into a bush of briars near his grotto, and rolled himself most vehemently, until his whole body was dilacerated and formed but one wound. Thus he extinguished the flame of lust.

The fame of his sanctity daily increased and spread throughout the country. It also penetrated into a monastery, the monks of which entreated him to come and be their director. The holy man reluctantly consented. But some of the monks who were accustomed to an easy and free life, would not comply with the pious rules and regulations which Benedict introduced. To rid themselves of him, they resolved to mingle poison with his wine. Benedict never ate nor drank without first blessing the victuals. But when he came to bless the wine in the chalice, the latter bursted asunder and the mystery of their malice was unveiled. Benedict rose calmly, saying: "Brethren, may God be merciful unto you! Why have you done this to me? Did I not

already tell you, that my habit of life could never be reconciled to yours. Find another guide for yourselves, since you can no longer have me as such." Saying this, Benedict returned to his beloved desert with the intention, to live there in the happy communion with God still more retired than ever.

The Almighty however wished that the light which he had kindled in Benedict, should no longer be hidden. The more the saint endeavored to withdraw from the society of men, so much the more disciples flocked around him. Their number daily increased, since they not appeared one by one but in large troops, and demanded that they should all live together and form a community of which Benedict should be the abbot. The means for erecting the necessary edifices and procuring real estates, were not wanting, because the benefactors were numerous. Thus within the course of some years arose twelve monasteries to each of which the saint gave an abbot. He himself lived in his cell on Mount Cavo, and retained with him only few disciples to whom he was a kind teacher, abbot, and instructor. The saint also wrote a rule for the monks of these monasteries, according to which they were to model the lives. This rule is this very day yet the principle of spiritual life of the Benedictines, blessed by God for all ages. The holy life of St. Benedict and of his disciples was not only known in the surrounding country, but the fame of it reached even Rome. The hearts of many young men burned with the desire of entering this holy community, and parents felt greatly consoled at having found a place of refuge, in which they could preserve their children from the allurements of the world. Many came to the saint, entreating him to accept the tutorship of their young sons. Among these were also two Roman senators who begged admission for their sons, named Maurus and Placidus. Maurus was twelve years of age, and brought the baptismal robe unstained into the monastery. He was loved very much by St. Benedict on account of his unfeigned humility, minute obedience and his purity of heart.

One day when St. Benedict was in his cell, Placidus whom he no less loved for his pure soul, went to the neighboring sea in order to get some water. Dipping his bucket too hastily into the water, he lost his balance and fell into the sea. Benedict perceiving the danger of the boy, immediately called Maurus. "Maurus," he exclaims, "quick, hasten for the youth that was sent for water, for he has fallen into the sea, and the waves are already carrying him off!" Maurus instantly begged the saint's blessing and hastened in full speed to the sea. He looked at the boy, and thinking of nothing else but the command of saving him, jumped into the water, and, behold the miracle! he runs on the surface of the water as if it were ice. Thus he reached the boy, seized him by the hair and pulled him along with himself. Not until he had reached the shores he became aware that he had

been walking on the waters, when he almost fainted from fear and admiration. As soon as he had returned to the house, he narrated to St. Benedict what had taken place. The holy abbot replied that that was the reward of obedience. But Maurus answered that he had only done, what he had been ordered to do, and that on his own part he could not perceive any virtuous act in complying with the command of his father. But behold, when they were thus engaged in holy contest, Placidus entered and acted as the deciding judge, by saying: "I saw when I was drawn out of the water above my head the cloak of the abbot and perceived that it was he who dragged me to the shore."

More than thirty years Benedict's light had sent its rays over the Sabine Mountains. Every one pronounced his name with reverence, and saw in him the universal spiritual benefactor, pastor and teacher. Whoever was in need of counsel, came to him; and those that sought instruction, asked it of him; those that felt the necessity of prayer, recommended themselves to him; in short, all had recourse to him in their troubles and anxieties, and St. Benedict in this way gained the hearts of all for the love of their crucified Redeemer. Many renounced the world and offered their necks to the sweet yoke of Him who once said, that His yoke was easy and His burden light. Nevertheless, to the virtues of this great man the crown was wanting. Seven beatitudes he had already acquired, only the eighth was missing, namely: "To suffer persecution for justice sake;" but also that he should obtain.

There lived in the neighborhood a priest, named Florentius. This priest could not bear to see the confidence placed by every one in our saint, and sought by all means to avert the people's hearts from him. Not succeeding in this, Florentius was greatly enraged, and becoming daily more embittered by jealousy resolved to kill the saint. In those times it was yet a pious custom in the Church to send each other in token of holy love a loaf of blessed bread, called Eulogia. Florentius poisoned one these loafs, and sent it to the holy man who accepted it with thanks. St. Benedict immediately discovered what was wrong with it, and had it carried by a raven who daily received his food at the hand of the saint, to a place where it could not injure anybody. Florentius being aware that he was also foiled in his infernal attempt, meditated revenge on the souls of the saint's holy community. When they were laboring in the garden, in which also the holy abbot was with them, he sent seven unchaste women into the neighborhood of it, and ordered them to dance in a circle taking each other by the hand, that thus they might inflame the hearts of the young men with impurity. When St. Benedict saw this, he also frustrated this devilish trick of Florentius. Seized, however, by fear and pain as to the spiritual welfare of his children, Benedict resolved to leave the country, where eternal perdition was threat-

ening them. Having entrusted the different monasteries to the care of some of the elder monks, he left with the rest for Mount Cassino, which is situated between Rome and Naples. Florentius was almost in a transport of joy, when he perceived his ardent desire at last fulfilled; but the joy was of short duration. Suddenly his dwellinghouse fell in joy, burying him below its ruins.

St. Benedict found on Mount Cassino many remains of idolatry, as temples and altars, which were visited during the night by the inhabitants of the neighborhood. The saint however was determined on here making an end to heathenism. He tore down the temples and altars of the pagans, and in their places erected two chapels, one in honor of Martin of Tours, the other in honor of St. John the Baptist, adjacent to which he also built a large monastery. While this was done, he did not omit to open the eyes of these blind idolators, and to win them over to the only true faith.

Unceasingly he preached on the streets and even penetrated into their houses. Incessant were his prayers to God in their behalf. Gradually he succeeded in gaining them over. At first only some demanded holy baptism, but by and by they all flocked to him, earnestly beseeching him, not to deprive them of the grace of this holy sacrament. But Satan, the father of falsehood and prince of darkness, could not suffer to see himself defeated by our saint, and tried in every way to impede the conversion of these souls. He appeared to Benedict in the most hideous forms, raising hellish shouts and yells. The other monks heard his horrible clamors, although they could not see the hideous forms. Benedict's zeal was by no means impaired by these terrific spectacles, but he continued to propagate the holy faith over the whole country.

Whilst the monastery was being erected, Satan appeared in the saint's cell, mocking and deriding him, saying, that he had come to visit the workmen. The holy man immediately informed the monks by a messenger, saying: Brethren, be on your guard, for in this hour Satan will come to you. Hardly had the messenger pronounced these words, when the wall which they were then erecting, fell into ruins, killing a boy who already wore the habit of the order. The monks greatly afflicted, informed the saint of what had occured, who ordered the dead boy to be brought to him. Since, however, not only all the limbs of the body were broken, but even all the bones of it crushed, they picked up the pieces of it into a bedsheet, and thus carried them to the holy abbot. The saint had the body laid upon a matrass in his cell, on which he was wont to say his prayers. Having ordered the monks to leave him, he locked himself up, and began to pray most fervently to God; when lo! even in that hour the boy was sent back to resume his work.

Already while the erection of the new monasteries was going on, and especially after they were completed, the number of monks rapidly increased. The saint was most vigilant that the rule, which he had given them, should be observed. He prayed incessantly to God for illumination in order to guide his community in the spirit of prayer and mortification. God granted to him what he had demanded, nay more, for he had the gift to understand things hidden, as also to foresee future events.

One day while our saint took his evening repast, a monk, who was a lawyer's son, held the lamp for him, in whose heart arose, while performing this charitable act, thoughts of pride; for he thought by himself, "Who is he whom I have to serve at table thus holding the lamp for him, and who am I, that I tolerate this willingly, and execute so degrading a work?" Benedict's spirit penetrated into the heart of the culprit, and soon rebuked him severely in the following terms: "Brother, cross thy breast! What are you speaking in your heart? Cross thy breast!" Seeing that his reproach was to no effect, he called the other monks, had the lamp taken out of his hand, dismissed him from his occupation, and ordered that he should remain alone for that hour. The haughty monk was bettered by this chastisement, and afterwards humbly confessed his fault to his fellowbrethren who thereby were greatly edified.—

The wicked and haughty king of the Goths, Totila, who in his arrogance acknowledged no superior on earth, saw himself nevertheless impelled to bow before the spirit that dwelled in St. Benedict. He had been informed of the prophetic spirit of Benedict, and not believing in this divine gift, he wished to try the holy man. He, therefore, came to Mount Cassino with his servant Riggo whom he ordered to vest in his royal robes and thus appear before the saint. The saint, however, as soon as he saw him approaching, addressed him at a distance: "My son! depose the vestments you have on, they are not yours!" Riggo and all who accompanied him, were terrorstricken at these words. At the thought of having intended to deceive so holy a man, Riggo fell prostrate on the ground, after which he hastened to king Totila, informing him of all that had taken place. Totila struck with consternation, did not hesitate himself to come to the saint. He threw himself at his feet, and did not venture to rise, until the saint approached him, and taking him by the hand raised him up. St. Benedict now reproved the penitent king for his conduct, saying: "You perpetrate many crimes, you have perpetrated many already; forsake at last the ways of injustice. You will enter Rome, will cross the ocean, and will reign nine years hence, but in the tenth you will die!" What St. Benedict here predicted, was minutely fulfilled.

Not long afterwards when Totila was about to besiege Rome, the bishop of Canosa was with the saint, and remarked to him:

the city would be destroyed by this king; and henceforward it would remain uninhabitated. The saint, however, replied, that through these wandering tribes the city would not be destroyed, but that it would be molested by storms, hurricanes and earthquakes in such a manner as finally to dissolve in itself. St. Gregory the great, who afterwards wrote the life of our saint, remarks in relation to this: "The mystery of this prophecy is at hand; it is manifest to us all who witness the downfall of the city-walls, churches and houses by storm and the ruin of its edifices by age."

A noble man Theoprobus, who was an intimate friend of the holy man, one day entered his cell and found him weeping bitterly. For some time he remained at a distance, thinking that the saint was absorbed in prayer and was shedding tears as he was wont to do. Seeing, however, that Benedict was not engaged in prayer, he approached him, enquiring for the reason of his affliction. Immediately the holy man replied: "This entire monastery which I have erected and all that I with my brethren have brought in order, is by decree of the Almighty delivered unto the heathens; hardly could I obtain from His majesty the salvation of the souls (that is, the lives) of the monks." Forty years after this prediction, the monastery was destroyed by the Longobardi who invaded it during the night, yet none of the monks was killed. Like all friends of God, so also St. Benedict had compassion with all who were afflicted, and an unshaken confidence in God. During a famine which at that time ravaged the country, the saint distributed among the poor all that he possessed of eatables. Nothing was left save a little oil, when a subdeacon, named Agapitus, came asking for a little of it. The saint ordered that the scanty remnant should immediately be given him. The steward of the monastery, however, refused it. When St. Benedict asked him whether he had given the oil to the poor subdeacon, the brother steward apologized that if he had given it to him, nothing would have remained for the monks. The saint inflamed with holy anger, ordered him to fling the oilvessel out the window. It was done. Outside of the window was a precipice, from which rocks and cliffs projected. Every one thought, that the vessel would be dashed in a thousand pieces. But it was well preserved, not even a drop of oil having been spilled. The saint then gave it to the petitioner. The monastery was now totally destitute of provisions. To whom should the monks have recourse in order to appease their hunger? The saint, however, was not in the least embarassment concerning the imminent danger. They all had recourse to prayer. In the place where they prayed there was a large oil-vessel with a heavy cover. They prayed for a long time. But behold! the cover of the vessel began to rise and the oil rushed forth in abundance from the vessel. Now St. Benedict terminated his prayer and the oil seized flowing. The

saint availed himself of this wonderful event to admonish the diffident steward to be more confident in the goodness of God. The saint also by his faithful prayers raised the dead to life. Thus he restored to life the son of a peasant, who had been most ardently entreating him.

Endowed with the gift of prophecy and decorated with the power of miracles, also ornamented with every virtue, especially that of prayer, our saint broadly diffused heavenly blessings, especially by the erection of so many monasteries, even in far distant countries in which his spirit continued to live among his children. Thousands of youths received in them a religious training and an educational instruction. Popes, bishops, and a host of learned and pious men, went forth from these monasteries.

The saint had a dear and pious sister, named Scholastica, whose feast the Church celebrates on the 10th of February. She together with other holy virgins led a most holy life in a convent about three miles distant from Mount Cassino. This sister God had taken to Himself. Benedict saw her soul soaring towards heaven in the shape of a dove. He was seized with a longing to be united to his beloved sister in heaven, there to praise God forever. He ardently desired death and foretold the hour of it to his children. On the 15th of March 543, he ordered his grave to be opened. He soon was attacked by a fever and in defiance of the precaution taken in administering him, the illness increased. On the 21st of March he ordered his monks to carry him into the oratory, where he received the holy viaticum to strengthen himself for the last struggle, and standing upright, supported by his beloved children, with hands raised in prayers towards heaven, he yielded his pure soul into the hands of its creator.

[For prayer of the Church, Epistle and Gospel see feast of St. Anthony.]

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FESTIVAL OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

[March 25.]

His festival is thus named, because the Church on this day celebrates the commemoration of the day ever memorable in the Book of Life, upon which the holy, angelically pure Virgin Mary received the glorious announcement, that she was chosen to be the Mother of the Redeemer.

The Church in the Introit exclaims: All the rich among the people shall entreat thy countenance: after her

shall virgins be brought to the king: her neighbors shall be brought to thee in joy and gladness. My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my words to the king. Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who wast pleased that Thy Word, when the angel delivered his message, should take flesh in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary: give ear to our humble petitions; and grant, that we, who believe her to be truly the Mother of God, may be helped by her prayers.

[The Lesson and Explanation as on Ember-Wednesday in Advent.]

GOSPEL. (*Luke* i. 26—38.) At that time: The angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel being come in, said unto her: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. Who having heard, was troubled at his saying, and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said to her: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father: and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end. And Mary said to the angel: How shall this be done, because I know not man? And the angel answering, said to her: The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God. And behold, thy cousin Elizabeth she also hath conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren: because no word shall be impossible with God. And Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word.

Why does the Evangelist so minutely detail the announcement of the Incarnation?

That we may clearly take into our thoughts, believe in, and meditate upon the mystery of the Incarnation, upon which depends our eternal salvation.

Why was an angel sent to Mary?

To announce to her, that it was God's will, that His divine Son, in order to redeem the human race by His sufferings and death, should take human nature from her, and because from the human race, redeemed by Christ, the number of angels was to be replaced.

Was the Incarnation necessary for our redemption?

Yes; for, as God, Christ could not suffer, and without an infinitely meritorious suffering which no one but God could give,

sufficient satisfaction could not have been rendered, and, therefore, God the Son must humble Himself before God and suffer, which could only be by His becoming incarnate. This shows the enormity of sin, for which no man however pure, no, not even an angel, but only a God-Man could atone.

Why did God require Mary's consent for the Incarnation of His Son?

To show us that God forces no one to good, much less to evil; that we might learn, that even to good works our good intention and assent are necessary, if we wish them to be meritorious; in order, as St. Bede says, that Mary because of her consent should have imparted to her all, even the highest graces, which all creatures as well as all angels and men have ever by their thoughts, words, and deeds deserved.

Why was Mary troubled at the angel's message?

Partly from humility, partly from modesty. She was so humble, that she regarded herself as the least of all creatures, and could not comprehend, how such an honor could be hers. She was so modest, and so loved virginal purity, that the presence of the angel and his message troubled her. From this all maidens should see, that their loveliest adornments and most necessary virtues are modesty, and humility, and love of purity, which Mary so valued, that she would not lose them even to become Mother of God.

What is meant by the throne of David?

The kingdom of Christ, of which David's government was a representation. (*Ps.* cxxxi.)

Why is David called the father of Christ?

Because Christ's Mother, Mary, descended from the house of David, and, therefore, David according to nature was the forefather of Christ.

Who was the real father of Christ?

Properly to answer this, we must observe that in Christ there are two natures, the divine and the human. In His human nature He had indeed a mother, but no father, for Joseph was only His fosterfather; in His divine nature He had no mother, but only a father, the Heavenly Father.

How, then, was Christ conceived?

By the overshadowing and power of the Holy Ghost, who by His divine omnipotence effected the conception of Him whom Mary was to bring forth.

How should we be encouraged by the words: No word shall be impossible with God?

We should be encouraged by them to a great confidence in God, who can readily help us in the most difficult circumstances,

even when help seems impossible, and who will also help us, if it is beneficial for us, and we ask Him. This words moreover admonish us to a firm faith which cannot be shaken by the most incomprehensible mystery in matters of faith.

Why does Mary call herself the handmaid of the Lord?

From humility, which next to her maidenly modesty was her most remarkable virtue, which causes St. Bernard to say: "By her purity she pleased God, and by her humility she received Him."

EXPLANATION OF THE "HAIL MARY" OR THE ANGELIC SALUTATION.

Why is the "Hail Mary" called the Angelic Salutation?

BEcause it commences with the words addressed to Mary by the Angel Gabriel, when he brought her the message, that she was to be the Mother of God.

In what does the Hail Mary consist?

Of the words of the Angel Gabriel; of St. Elisabeth's salutation, when she was visited by Mary; of words, added by the Catholic Church.

What words did the angel say to Mary?

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou amongst women!

What is meant by these words?

The word Hail, that is, Salutation to thee! Peace with thee! or, Joy to thee! also expresses the reverence which the angel had for the blessed Virgin, and which we should have for her. Mary was the maiden's name, great and mysterious, for Mary means Virgin. Christ is "Our Lord", Mary "Our Virgin". Mary means also "the enlightened", and Christ is the sun of justice, Mary is beautiful as the moon, she has her radiance from the sun, and is a light for us poor sinners. Mary means again "Star of the Sea", and she it is who shines for us voyagers on the stormy ocean of life to the heavenly fatherland. The words: full of grace, show us that God had given more grace to her than to all men and angels together. As there may be many vessels filled with a precious cordial, but the largest vessel contains the greatest quantity, so there are many saints who are full of grace, but Mary has more grace than any. We should for this reason always pray with confidence to her to obtain for us, by her powerful intercession, those graces which are most necessary for our salvation. By the words: the Lord is with thee, the angel intended to express, that the Lord was with this maiden in every way, that He is with His pure creatures, not only in His reality, presence, and omnipotence as with all men, not only in His grace as with the just, but with the

greatest and most extraordinary grace, love, and familiarity. St. Augustine observes: "The angel wished to say: The Lord is with thee more than with me; the Lord is with thee, so that He may be in thy heart, in thy body, may fill thy spirit, fill thy flesh." "Could God raise her higher!" St. Bernard here exclaims. Ah, that the Lord might be with us also, and Mary by her intercession obtain graces for us! Finally, the words: Blessed art thou amongst women, mean: thou art the most blessed, the happiest of women, for thou of all thy sex art chosen to be the Mother of God, at the same time Mother and Maid. Maid and Mother! How much is contained in the salutation which one of the highest spirits surrounding the throne of God, addressed to Mary, and how much it requires us to love and daily salute Mary, our most tender Mother!

What are the words used by St. Elisabeth, and what is their signification?

Elisabeth repeated the angel's words: Blessed art thou amongst women, adding "and blessed is the fruit of thy womb," which signified, that Jesus should be praised, because through Him God would bestow all spiritual and heavenly blessings upon us.

Which are the words added by the Church?

Those which follow the words: "and blessed is the fruit of thy womb," explaining them: Jesus, by which she wishes us to see, that we are to offer this prayer to God in the name of Christ; and then the invocation to Mary: Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

What do these words mean?

When we say Holy Mary, we mean to express, that Mary is God's holy and wonderful work, Daughter of the Heavenly Father, Mother of the Son, and Bride of the Holy Ghost, and has all her sanctity, beauty, and veneration from the fruit of her womb, Jesus Christ. The glorious title of Mother of God is given her, because Mary bore not an ordinary man, but Jesus Christ who is both God and Man. Therefore from her was born the Son of God, the incarnate God, not a man who appeared like God, but God in flesh. She is, then, really and truly the Mother of God, our Lord's Mother. The fathers who had assembled in the holy Council of Chalcedon, to refute the heresy of Nestorius, who sought to deprive Mary of the title of Mother of God, called her "Holy Mary, Mother of God: the Virgin Mary is the Mother of God!" As of herself Mary is not holy, and cannot of herself help us, we add: pray for us, by which we ask for her powerful intercession; and conscious of our poverty and sinfulness, call ourselves poor sinners, whose only mediator is Christ, it is true, but who turn to Mary, the Mother of mercy, because they feel themselves too unworthy to pray to Christ Him-

self, and, therefore, entreat this loving mother to obtain for them amendment of life, remission of sin, consolation in affliction, remedy in sickness, assistance in need, increase of grace, preservation, perseverance, and the crown; and may Mary pray for us now and at the hour of our death. Now, while the divine mercy is given us, and especially in the hour of death, when the weapons for battle against the enemy fall from our hands, and the evil one tempts us all the more violently, because he knows that his time is short (*Apoc.* xii. 12.), in that hour on which depends our eternal welfare or grief. By the one word Amen we affirm, that we remain true venerators of the Virgin Mother of God, and at all time expect grace from God through her intercession. "Yes," says St. Bernard, "let us as sincerely, heartily, and confidently venerate Mary as we can, for such is His will who desired, that we should have all (salvation and redemption in Christ) through Mary." The Son will assuredly hear the Mother, and the Father the Son. Let us, then, strive to rise by her to Him who by her came down to us!

Through thee, O blessed Discoverer of grace! Mother of life! Mother of salvation! we have access to the Son, who accepts us from thee, who was given us by thee—to Jesus Christ, eternally blessed.

ON THE "ANGELUS DOMINI", THE ANGEL OF THE LORD.

Who introduced the angelic salutation into the Catholic Church?

Pope Urban II., who at the Council of Clermont, France, in 1095, ordered that the bells be rung every day in the morning, at noon, and night, and that at each time be repeated the angelic salutation. His special intention was to obtain Mary's protection for the crusades. The crusades which had for their object the rescuing of the holy Sepulchre from the hands of the infidels, took place in the eleventh century. These wars are now ended, but the life of the whole Church, of every Christian, is a crusade against sin and temptation. We always need Mary's protection; and, therefore, the custom of repeating the salutation is still retained in the Church. Formerly at the ringing of the Angelus, all the faithful fell on their knees, and even now pious Catholics do so. Do you kneel also, for you thus venerate the Mother of Jesus, and by her Jesus Himself. St. Charles Borromeo, an Archbishop, did not hesitate to kneel in the open street and repeat the angelic salutation.

In what does the "Angelus Domini" consist?

In this that we say three Ave Maria; before the first one we say: The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary, and she

was conceived by the Holy Ghost; before the second: Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto me according to thy word; before the third: and the word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us.

Why and how often is the Angelus Domini said?

It is said in order to remind us of Christ's Incarnation and in thanks for it; to ask the blessed Virgin's maternal protection against all enemies visible and invisible; to recollect at least three times in the day, morning, noon, and night, like David to give praise to God, and take a little time expressly for prayer, for which purpose the bells are rung three times a day.

How should we say the Angelus Domini?

With respect, that is, slowly and kneeling (except on Saturday evenings and Sundays in Easter-time, when it is said standing); contritely, since Christ became man because of our sins; devoutly, that is, heart and lips should be in accord.

SALUTATION TO MARY.

Hail Mary, full of grace! I rejoice and give thee joy, that thou wert chosen for the Mother of the Most High and Queen of heaven and earth. With thee is the Father who from all eternity begot Him whom thou didst bear; with thee is the Son whom thou didst carry in thy virginal womb; with thee is the Holy Ghost, overshadowed by whose power thou didst become the Mother of God. Thou art blessed amongst women, thou art the Joy of heaven and the Ornament of the Church of God, pray for us now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF THE SEVEN DOLORS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

[On the Friday before Palm-Sunday.]

His festival is thus named, because the various sufferings Mary endured during her whole life, may be placed under seven heads: 1. Her son's circumcision. 2. The flight into Egypt. 3. The three days He was lost in the temple. 4. When she saw Him carrying His cross. 5. His death. 6. The taking down from the cross. 7. His burial. In continual remembrance of these sorrows, the Church ordered this festival, and for this reason the dolorous mother is represented with one, sometimes with seven swords piercing her heart.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, in whose passion, according to Simeon's prophecy, the sword of grief, pierced the sweet soul of glorious Mary, the Virgin-Mother; grant in Thy mercy, that we, who with honor commemorate her sorrows and sufferings, may be helped by the glorious merits and prayers of all the saints that faithfully stood by Thy cross, so as to partake of the happy fruits of Thy passion. Who liveth.

LESSON. (*Judith* xiii. 22—25.) The Lord hath blessed thee by his power, because by thee he hath brought our enemies to nought. Blessed art thou, O daughter, by the Lord the most high God, above all women upon the earth. Blessed be the Lord who made heaven and earth. Because he hath so magnified thy name this day, that thy praise shall not depart out of the mouth of men, who shall be mindful of the power of the Lord for ever, for that thou hast not spared thy life, by reason of the distress and tribulation of thy people, but hast prevented our ruin in the presence of our God.

GOSPEL. (*John* xix. 25—27.) At that time: There stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen. When Jesus therefore had seen his mother, and the disciple standing, whom he loved, he saith to his mother: Woman, behold thy son; after that, he saith to the disciple: Behold thy mother. And from that hour the disciple took her to his own.

[An indulgence of one hundred days is obtained by repeating with devotion and contrition the following hymn.]

STABAT MATER.

At the Cross her station keeping,
Stood the mournful mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last.
Through her heart, His sorrow sharing,
All His bitter anguish bearing,
Now at length the sword has passed.

O, how sad and sore distressed
Was that mother highly blessed,
Of the sole begotten One!
Christ above in torment hangs.
She beneath beholds the pangs
Of her dying glorious Son.

Is there one who would not weep,
Whelmed in miseries so deep
Christ's dear mother to behold?
Can the human heart refrain
From partaking in her pain,
In that mother's pain untold?

Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
She beheld her tender child
All with bloody scourges rent;
For the sins of His own nation
Saw Him hang in desolation,
Till His spirit forth He sent.

O thou mother, fount of love!
Touch my spirit from above,
Make my heart with thine accord:
Make me feel as thou hast felt,
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ my Lord.

Holy mother, pierce me through,
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Saviour crucified.
Let me share with thee His pain,
Who for all my sins was slain,
Who for me in torments died.

Let me mingle tears with thee,
Mourning Him who mourned for me,
All the days that I may live:
By the Cross with thee to stay,
There with thee to weep and pray,
Is all I ask of thee to give.

Virgin of all virgins blest!
Listen to my fond request:
Let me share thy grief divine,
Let me to my latest breath,
In my body bear the death
Of that dying Son of thine.

Wounded with His every wound,
Steep my soul, till it hath swooned
In His very blood away;
Be to me, o Virgin, nigh,
Lest in flames I burn and die,
In His awful judgment-day.

Christ, when Thou shalt call me hence,
Be Thy Mother my defence,
Be Thy Cross my victory;
While my body here decays,
May my soul Thy goodness praise
Safe in paradise with Thee.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. GEORGE, MARTYR.

[April 23]

ST. George was born of an eminent family in Cappadocia, and after his father's death accompanied his mother to Palestine, her native country, where she had considerable property. A Christian from his youth, St. George walked faithfully in accordance with the requirements of the Christian law. When grown to be a young man, he accepted a military position in the army under the Emperor Diocletian, who appointed him colonel, not knowing he was a Christian; but when Diocletian, who was the great enemy of the Christians, published his cruel edict of persecution, George resigned his position and made the emperor an earnest exposition of the cruelty and absurdity of his edict. Diocletian incensed at this, caused him to be thrown into prison, and sought by the most flattering offers to lure him from the faith. But the saint replied: "I despise thy promises, I fear not thy threats. Thy empire is not lasting, thy power is but weak, like every thing which fortune promises, and avails but little. It were better for you, O emperor, if you were to confess the true God, and strive to gain the heavenly kingdom." Enraged at these words, the emperor caused a large stone to be hung around the saint's neck and him to be again imprisoned. On the following day the saint was again brought before the tribunal, and as he remained firm in the Christian faith, he was bound to a wheel and turned over pointed knives and sharp daggers, which rent his body; but in the midst of the torture he

heard a heavenly voice say: "Lay aside all fear, George, for I am with thee," and there appeared to him a man of great stature who took him by the hand, embraced him, and strengthened him for the struggle. George remained unshaken, and his noble example converted many pagans whom the emperor caused to be put to death.

When the emperor saw, that he could not break the courage of the saint, he sought once again by the greatest promises to move him to idolatry. "If it so pleases you, then", said the saint, "let us go into the temple and see the gods whom you so venerate." The emperor, delighted with this concession, went at once with him and a great number of people to the temple. St. George approaching the god Apollo, said: "You desire an offering which belongs only to God?" and as he spoke, he made the sign of cross on the image. Hardly was this done, than the devil who possessed it, cried out: "I am not God! I am not God! There is no God but Him whom you adore!" "Then why", demanded George, "do you not exist in my presence and that of other worshipers of the true God?" At these words the evil spirits raised a fearful cry, and all the idols fell to the ground. But the priests of the gods and all the people burst into the greatest fury, and wished to tear the saint into pieces and the emperor saw himself obliged to bring George away immediately and have him beheaded. St. George was highly venerated in the East and West, and is the special patron of soldiers in battle, who by his intercession have often obtained wonderful assistance.

The Introit of the Mass reads: Thou hast protected me, O God, from the assembly of the malignant, Alleluia, Alleluia, from the multitude of the workers of iniquity, Alleluia, Alleluia. Hear, O God, my prayer, when I make supplication to thee; deliver my soul from the fear of the enemy. (*Ps.* lxiii. 1, 3.) Glory, &c.

Prayer of the Church as on the Feast of St. Blase, Febr. 3.

Lesson. (*Wisd.* v. 1—5.) *See Feast of the Apostles Philip and Jame, May 1.*

GOSPEL. (*John* xv. 1—7.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: I am the true vine; and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me, that beareth not fruit, he will take away: and every one that beareth fruit, he will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now you are clean by reason of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine: you the branches: he

that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing. If any one abide not in me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire, and he burneth. If you abide in me, and my word abide in you, you shall ask whatever you will, and it shall be done unto you.

EXPLANATION. Christ, the God-Man, our Redeemer, compares Himself in a most instructive manner to a vine. His Father, like a husbandman, when sending Him down to earth to be born of the Virgin Mary, planted Him in the earth. The vine is Christ, the branches the disciples and all who by baptism have been received into the holy Church, and are growing as living branches from Christ. As the branches are united with the vine and by this union obtain sap, strength, and nourishment, so that they bear leaves, blossoms, fruit, so are true faithful Christians united in faith and love with Christ, and as long as they remain with Him, receive from Him the grace to leaf out, to blossom with holy virtues and bear the fruit of good works. This especially takes place, as the fathers of the Church remark, by means of holy Communion, wherein the soul becomes one with Jesus, and receives from Him, as it were, the spiritual sap which enables them to bear the fruits of a pious, godpleasing life. If the branch is broken from the vine, it withers and is only fit to be burned; so the soul of man without Jesus becomes withered, that is, it loses the spiritual life, the grace, the love, the strength to do good, and can no longer bring forth the fruit of good works and of holy virtues. As the husbandman cuts the withered branches from the vine, so the Heavenly Husbandman separates from Christ those who practise no virtues, accomplish no good works; He takes from them Christ's grace and spirit, and after death deprives them of eternal communion with Him. As the living branches are kept clear by the husbandman from watershoots, from superfluous leaves, from useless blossoms and vermin, that they may bear better and more abundant fruit; so the Heavenly Husbandman keeps the faithful who are united in faith and love with Christ, clear from all earthly affections, by afflictions, temptations, persecutions, by poverty and all kinds of trials, by remorse of conscience, by fear, which He secretly imparts to them, especially by His holy word, which, as the apostle says, is living and effectual, and more piercing than any two-edged sword: and reaching unto the division of the soul and the spirit, of the joints also and the marrow. (*Heb.* iv. 12.)

Remain, therefore, my Christian, always, like St. George, by faith and love and a pious active life, a living branch of the vine,

Christ, on whom you were grafted in holy Baptism, whom you have so often received in holy Communion. Woe to you, if by a lukewarm, vicious life you separate from Christ; you will then wither away, and be given up to be eternally burned!

SUPPLICATION. O Jesus, dispenser of life! do not suffer me to grow cold in love, do not permit faith to die in me, do not allow that I am separated from Thee, and be lost. Rather assist me by Thy grace, that I may bring forth many fruits of virtue and good works.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. PHILIP AND JAMES, APOSTLES.

[May 1.]

Hilip, born at Bethsaida, was one of the first disciples of Jesus, and was chosen one of the apostles. Burning with the fire of divine love, he sought to gain disciples for our Lord, and brought Him Nathaniel and afterwards the gentiles who wished to see Jesus. From many passages of the gospel we can see, that Philip was especially dear to the Saviour. After our Lord's ascension Philip, having travelled through many countries, at last resorted to both Phrygias, where he labored, until he reached an advanced age, with the greatest success for the propagation of Christianity, which so exasperated the idolatrous priests, that when he was eighty years old, they seized the venerable man, scourged, crucified, and finally stoned him to death.—We have especially to learn from the life of St. Philip, that, having once found the truth for ourselves, we must labor to bring others to God.

St. James, the Apostle, who on account of his extraordinary sanctity was called by the Jews the just man, was a brother of Judas Thaddeus and son of Cleophas, whose pious wife, Mary, was sister or aunt of the Mother of Jesus. In the second year of Christ's ministry, James and Judas were chosen apostles. St. James was greatly esteemed by the apostles, and was made the first bishop of Jerusalem. In this office he lived in constant solitude, never drank wine, nor permitted his hair to be cut; fasted continually on bread and water; and prayed so constantly, kneeling, with his head bent to the floor, that the skin of his knees became as tough as the skin of a camel. He worked many miracles, converted many eminent Jews to the faith, and on account of his piety and generosity was held in such respect by Jews and Gentiles, that they would fall on their knees before him, and kiss his garments. The Jewish priests, therefore, tried to induce him to leave the faith,

hoping thus to extinguish Christianity in Jerusalem. With hypocritical faces they prayed him to give his judgment of Christ; in answer to their request, he ascended to an elevated position in the temple, and, to their amazement, publicly pronounced, Christ to be the promised Messiah and true Son of God, in whom we must all believe. Some of the people were converted by his words; but his hypocritical enemies at once rushed to the saint, and threw him to the ground. As he was not immediately killed, and prayed for his enemies, they stoned him, and one man, filled with fiendish rage, struck his head and killed him with a fuller's rod.

The Introit is from Esdras ix.: They cried out unto thee, O Lord, in their affliction: and thou didst hear them from heaven. Alleluia, Allel. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye just, praise becometh the upright. Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who comfortest us by the yearly solemnity of Thy Apostles Philip and James: grant, we beseech Thee, that we may be instructed by their example, for whose merits we rejoice. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Wisd.* v. 1—5.) The just shall stand with great constancy against those that have afflicted them, and taken away their labours. These seeing it shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the suddenness of their unexpected salvation, saying within themselves, repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit: These are they whom we had some time in derision, and for a parable of reproach. We fools esteemed their life, madness, and their end without honour. Behold, how they are numbered among the children of God, and their lot is amongst the saints.

This lesson is so clear, that it requires no explanation. We are to consider and apply it for ourselves, and look to it, that we do not have to suffer like these impious ones.

GOSPEL. (*John* xiv. 1—13.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: Let not your hearts be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many mansions. If not, I would have told you, that I go to prepare a place for you. And if I shall go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will take you to myself, that where I am, you also may be. And whither I go you know, and the way you know. Thomas saith to him: Lord, we know not whither thou goest: and how can we know the way? Jesus saith to him: I am the way, and the truth and

the life. No man cometh to the Father, but by me. If you had known me, you would without doubt have known my Father also: and from henceforth you shall know him, and you have seen him. Philip saith to him: Lord, shew us the Father, and it is enough for us. Jesus saith to him: So long a time have I been with you: and have you not known me? Philip, he that seeth me, seeth the Father also. How sayest thou, Shew us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak to you, I speak not of myself. But the Father who abideth in me, he doth the works. Believe you not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? Otherwise believe for the very works' sake. Amen, amen I say to you, he that believeth in me, the works that I do, he also shall do, and greater than these shall he do. Because I go to the Father, and whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, that will I do.

Why did Jesus say to his disciples, Let not your hearts be troubled?

He said this to comfort them in advance, because He foresaw, that they, on account of their great love for Him, would be greatly afflicted by His ignominious sufferings and their own oppressions.

Learn from this, that God consoles those who suffer persecution for His sake.

Why did He say: You believe in God, believe also in me?

He wished to express to them, that if they believed God could assist them in their trials and persecutions, they should believe, that Christ could do the same, for He is true God and perfectly equal in all things to His Father.

What is meant by the many mansions in heaven?

The different degrees of reward, of joy, and of glory, which each and every one in heaven will receive according to his merits.

How did Christ prepare a place in heaven for us?

By His sufferings, His death, His resurrection and ascension, He has obtained heavenly joys for us, and opened for us the entrance to heaven which sin had closed against us.

When did Christ take His disciples to Himself?

At their happy death in this world. He will also one day take us to Himself, if we live and die His true disciples.

How is Christ the way, the truth, and the life?

Christ is the way by His holy doctrine and example; He is the truth by the fulfilment of all prophecies, by His mysteries, His promises and threats, His gospel and His Church, for, as God, He cannot err, lie, or deceive; He is the life, because He by His death has obtained us the life of grace and glory. As St. Bernard beautifully says: "We follow Thee, O Lord, after Thee, to Thee, because thou art the way, the truth, and the life; the way of example, the truth in promise, the life in reward." And St. Hilary: "Christ leads us not falsely, for He is the way; He deceives us not, for He is the truth; and deserts us not in the terror of death, for He is the life."

Did not the apostles know Christ?

They certainly knew Him to be the Son of God, as Peter in the name of all affirmed, but they had only very vague ideas about the Three Persons of the Most Holy Trinity, which mystery they had yet to learn perfectly from the Holy Ghost. -- How many there are among Christians who possess no true knowledge of their faith, do not try to grow in its knowledge, although it is especially in these times, when the true faith is so strongly attacked by heretics and infidels, that we should be well grounded in it. Seek, then, to know the true faith, by invoking the Holy Ghost, reading good books, and hearing instructions and sermons on Christian doctrine, that you may not be infected and led away by insinuating errors.

Why did Christ say to Philip: He that seeth me, seeth the Father also?

Because Christ in nature and essence is perfectly equal to His Father, although different in person. Therefore Christ adds, that He is in the Father, and the Father in Him.

Why should the disciples believe for the works' sake?

Because Christ performed miracles which no man could, and God must therefore be in Him. (*John* iii. 2.)

How is it, that those who believe in Christ, work even greater miracles?

St. Augustine says, this is because Christ through them works still greater miracles than when upon earth Himself.

PRAYER TO ST. PHILIP. O St. Philip! chosen disciple of the Lord, to whom thou didst bring Nathaniel to learn the mysteries of faith, thou who didst require to see the Heavenly Father, thou who didst preach most zealously Christ Jesus, thou who didst permit thyself to be nailed to the cross and willingly slain for love of Him: obtain for me and all men, I beseech thee, the grace zealously to lead others

to good, greatly to desire God and His truth, and in the hope of the eternal, happy vision of God, patiently to endure the sufferings and difficulties of life.

PRAYER TO ST. JAMES. O St. James! who didst live with such temperance and rigor, didst pray so zealously and constantly, even for thy enemies: obtain for us, I beseech thee, from thy Lord and Master, that, like thee, we may live temperately and in penitence, adoring God in spirit and truth, and serving Him humbly and reverently. Implore for us the light of the Holy Ghost by which thou didst write thy epistle, that we may follow thy doctrines, diligently strive to do good works, and especially, like thee, to love our enemies and pray for them.

SHORT LESSONS FROM THE EPISTLE OF ST. JAMES.

All adversities of this life are to be regarded as graces from God, and to be borne with cheerfulness. (i. v.)

Faith without works is dead, and does not avail to salvation. (ii.)

For him who does not control his tongue, his religion is vain. (i. iii.)

All our misfortunes come from our immoderate and ungoverned passions. (iv.)

The prayer of the just man avails much with God, and is a great consolation in affliction. (v.)

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FESTIVAL OF THE FINDING OF THE HOLY CROSS.

[May 3.]

Why is this day thus called?

Because on this day the Catholic Church makes solemn commemoration of the day on which, in the year 326, St. Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine, found the true Cross of our Lord.

Where was the Cross before this discovery?

It lay in the city of Jerusalem, buried under ruins, and over it was built a temple of the goddess Venus. The Emperor Hadrian who lived two hundred years before Helena, had undertaken not only to profane the sacred places of our Lord's death and burial, but to conceal all traces of them.

How did St. Helena find the Cross?

When her son, the Emperor Constantine, had conquered his enemy, the cruel Maxentius, by the aid of the holy Cross, which he saw in the heavens, radiant and glorious, with the inscription: "In this sign conquer!" he became animated with such veneration for the Cross, that he commanded that throughout the whole Roman empire it should be honored, and no one again put to death upon a Cross. He also resolved to build a magnificent Church in Jerusalem in honor of the holy Cross, and his mother, the Empress Helena, in her very advanced age went herself into the holy Land, and undertook with the aid of St. Macarius, Bishop of Jerusalem, to find the sacred burial-place of Christ. After clearing the spot from the rubbish, she was successful in finding the vault of the holy Sepulchre. Near to it they found three crosses, the nails, and the inscription which had been placed over the Cross. In order to know which was the true Cross, St. Macarius full of faith fervently prayed to God, and caused a woman, who was mortally ill, to be touched with the three crosses. The first two had no effect, but when touched by the third, she rose up in perfect health. Thus they received the assurance, that the true Cross was found. Helena sent one part of the Cross and the nails to her son at Constantinople; another part, with the inscription, she presented to a Church at Rome, which now bears the name of the Church of the holy Cross; but the larger part of it, she caused to be set in silver, and gave to the Bishop of Jerusalem, to be preserved for after ages. When Constantine received the precious gift, he wrote to Macarius empowering him to build upon the spot of ground, where our Saviour rose from death, a Church which should exceed in splendor anything which had ever anywhere been seen. This Church was built, and under the name of the holy Sepulchre was dedicated in the year 335. The principal part of the holy Cross was some time after brought to Rome, and has been cut into small pieces and distributed over almost the whole world to be venerated as parts of the instrument of Redemption.

THE CHURCH'S SALUTATION TO THE HOLY CROSS.

O glorious and venerable Cross! O most precious wood! O wonderful sign by which sin, the devil and hell were conquered, and the world redeemed by Jesus Christ! Great art thou above all the trees of the cedars of the forest, for on thee hung the Life of the world! On thee Christ triumphed and by His death conquered death forever. Alleluia.

We adore Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, and bless Thee, because by Thy holy Cross thou hast redeemed the world.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who, in the miraculous discovery of the Holy Cross, wast pleased to renew the wonders of Thy passion: grant, that by the ransom paid on that saving wood, we may find help for the obtaining life eternal. Who livest.

Epistle (*Phil.* ii. 5—11.) *as on Palm-Sunday.*

GOSPEL. (*John* iii. 1—15.) At that time: There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night, and said to him: Rabbi, we know that thou art come a teacher from God: for no man can do these signs which thou dost, unless God be with him. Jesus answered, and said to him: Amen, amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith to him: How can a man be born again when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born again? Jesus answered: Amen, amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh: and that which is born of the spirit, is spirit. Wonder not that I said to thee, you must be born again. The Spirit breatheth where he will: and thou hearest his voice, but thou knowest not whence he cometh, nor whither he goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered, and said to him: How can these things be done? Jesus answered, and said to him: Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things? Amen, amen I say to thee, that we speak what we know, and we testify what we have seen, and you receive not our testimony. If I have spoken to you earthly things, and you believe not: how will you believe if I shall speak to you heavenly things? And no man hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended from heaven, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting.

SHORT EXPLANATION. Jesus in this gospel speaks of the regeneration of our souls, which depends upon faith in the Son of

God, and especially in His death of reconciliation on the cross. In this regeneration the Holy Ghost, by His grace, effects that in us which Christ won for us on the cross. Let us not, then, be led away by the seducing words of this world and its followers from faith in Christ, the Son of God, but, penetrated and renewed by His spirit, become worthy to enter the kingdom of heaven.

THE CHURCH'S PRAYER FOR FRUITFUL WEATHER.

From this day until the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (Sept. 14.), in many parochial Churches there are prayers said and a blessing given after holy Mass and after reading the Gospel of St. John, in order to obtain fruitful weather. In some Churches this is done from St. Mark's day until the end of the harrest-time.

The priest standing in the middle of the Altar, says:

℣. Give us peace, O Lord, in our days.
℟. Because there is none other who fights for us but Thou.
℣. Peace be in Thy strength,
℟. And plenty in Thy towers.

LET US PRAY!

O God, from whom proceed all right counsels and all just works, give Thy servants that peace which the world cannot give: that our hearts being disposed to keep Thy commandments, and the fear of enemies being removed, the times through Thy protection may be peaceable. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

℣. From lightning and tempest
℟. Deliver us, O Lord.
℣. May Thy mercy, O Lord, come upon us.
℟. For we have hoped in Thee.
℣. O Lord, hear our prayer.
℟. And let our cry come unto Thee.
℣. The Lord be with you.
℟. And with thy spirit.

LET US PRAY!

Defend, we beseech Thee, O Lord, this house from all evil powers and from every injury of tempests. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Give us, we beseech Thee, O Almighty God, by the intercession of Mary, the Mother of God, the holy angels, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, virgins, widows, and all Thy saints, Thy continual protection; grant

us favorable winds, shed upon us from heaven, unworthy though we are, Thy shelter against lightning and tempest; protect from henceforth all mankind and turn aside by the power of Thy might all evil influences of wind and weather.

O God, who controllest all nature for them who serve Thee, and by the force of Thy tempests causest them to do homage to Thy Majesty, remove all storms from us, and by Thy continual grace grant us favorable weather, that we may obtain mercy from Him whose anger we fear. Through our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

The priest then lifts up the piece of the Cross, or the ciborium, or the ostensorium, and says:

℣. Blessed be the name of the Lord
℟. Now and evermore.
℣. Our help is in the name of the Lord,
℟. Who made heaven and earth.

The blessing of Almighty God † the Father, † the Son, and of the † Holy Ghost, be upon you, upon this place, and upon the fruits of the earth, and remain with you forever. Amen.

ON THE HOLY CROSS.

Why is the Cross of Christ so highly venerated?

Because it is the altar on which He offered Himself for us, the instrument with which He accomplished our redemption, the victorious banner, wet with the blood of Christ, which conquered the devil and overcomes sin.

Are we permitted to adore the Cross of Christ?

By no means, for adoration belongs to God only. When the Church in venerating the Cross uses words, which imply adoration or, as in the preceding prayer, ascribes salvation to it, the words refer to Christ who redeemed us on the Cross, and therefore deserves the most grateful adoration.

How do we best venerate the Cross of Christ?

By never being ashamed to show it a true veneration, and for this reason gladly sign ourselves with the sign of the Cross; by loving the Cross, that is, by patiently, cheerfully, and with pleasure bearing the afflictions God sends us, and according to the doctrine and example of Christ, by daily taking up our cross and following Him. (*Luke* ix. 23.)

Why are Crosses erected on highways and other places?

That they may continually remind us of Christ and His sufferings, and encourage us to grateful love of Him, for St. Paul says: Looking on Jesus, the Author and Finisher of faith,

who having joy set before him, endured the Cross, despising the shame: and now sitteth on the right hand of the throne of God. (*Hebr.* xii. 2.)

Why is the Cross carried in public processions?

To shame our enemies by showing ourselves public venerators of the Cross of Christ, and glorying in it, as St. Paul says: But God forbid, that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. (*Gal.* vi. 14.)

Are our opponents wrong in being such enemies to the Cross, and on that account condemning us?

They are very wrong, for they thus condemn Christ Himself who for love of us bore the Cross, and place themselves among those of whom St. Paul says: For many walk of whom I have told you often (and now tell you weeping), that they are enemies of the Cross of Christ, whose end is destruction. (*Phil.* iii. 18.)

Why do we sign ourselves with the sign of the Cross?

To testify that we are Christians and worshipers of Christ Crucified, and have no fellowship with the enemies of the Cross of Christ; to show our faith in the Most Holy Trinity; to honor, and prove our grateful remembrance of the sufferings and death of Christ, who redeemed us and obtained all good things for us by His death on the Cross; to overcome the devil and his temptations, for he hates the Cross, which took away his power, and is banished by nothing more quickly than by the sign of the Cross; to perform all our undertakings happily in the name of Jesus, and to be preserved by Christ's merits from all harm of body or soul.

Is the making of the sign of the Cross an old custom?

The earliest fathers of the Church mention this custom, and say, it originated with the apostles. St. Nicephorus informs us, that St. John, the Evangelist, signed himself with the sign of the Cross; Tertullian (a. D. 160) urges the Christians to make the sign of the Cross, when coming in and going out, when dressing, at the table, in their rooms, when sitting down, and before every undertaking. St. Ephrem († a. D. 378) writes: "Arm thyself with the sign of the cross as with a shield, sign all thy members and thy heart, but sign thyself not only with thy hand, but with thy mind. Thy work, thy coming in and thy going out, thy bed, and the ground over which thou dost pass, sign every thing in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; for these are the strongest weapons."

Why at divine service do the priests make the sign of the cross over the people?

That the rich blessings of grace which Christ has obtained for us, may be imparted to the Christians, as St. Paul says: Blessed

be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. (i. *Eph.* i. 3.) A type of this custom was given by the Patriarch Jacob, when with crossed hands he blessed Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasse. This is a very old custom in the Church; the Council of Agade in the year 506 directed, that after prayers the people should be dismissed by the priest with the sign of the Cross.

PRAYER BEFORE A CRUCIFIX.

(By St. Augustine.)

Look down upon me, O most good and loving Jesus, kneeling before Thy face, and beseeching Thee with the most intense heartfelt fervor, to impress deep in my soul lively sentiments of faith, hope, and charity, true contrition for my sins, and a firm purpose of amendment, while I contemplate with ardent love and tender sympathy Thy five wounds, and meditate within myself upon them, remembering the words which were said by David, the Prophet of Thee, my Jesus: They pierced my hands and feet; they have numbered all my bones.*)

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. BONIFACE, APOSTLE OF THE GERMANS.

[June 5.]

Germany owes much to this great and holy man, who brought to it the doctrine of Jesus Christ, who led the Germans out of the darkness of paganism into the light of divine truth, who won them for heaven, and saved thousands of immortal souls. It is indeed well, that the glorious labors of this blessed benefactor of the Germans, should be everywhere known, and honor given to God because of him.

St. Boniface was born at Kerton, England, about 680, of noble and Christian parents. He received in baptism the name Winifred which he retained, until Pope Gregory II. bestowed upon him that of Boniface, which means one who does good, a benefactor. His pious parents were devoted to the priests, who were at that time preaching the gospel to the heathens, and most hos-

*) A plenary indulgence can be gained by any one who after receiving holy Communion, daily says this prayer penitently before a crucifix.

pitably received them at their house, where the little Boniface heard much about Jesus and His holy Church, and of the missionaries who go into all countries in order to convert the heathen, how they preached, and how they suffered for Christ, of the peaceful monastic life, wherein God is so faithfully served. All these things rejoiced the heart of the boy, and aroused in him the desire to enter a monastery, to become pious, learned, and a preacher of the faith to the heathen; and thus as a boy, Boniface came to the monastery for which he was designed by God. Under the care of the pious and learned Benedictine Abbot Winbert of the Nutcell Monastery, Boniface soon acquired much knowledge and, what is worth much more in the sight of God, reached a high point of piety. He received ordination when thirty years of age, and prayed the abbot to permit him to go to Friesland as a preacher of faith to the heathens, and to win them for Christ. Accompanied by two monks and with the abbot's blessing, he went to Friesland in the year 716; but it happened just at the time of his arrival, that Radbod, the rude King of the barbarians, was at war with his neighbors, so that Boniface could effect nothing and was obliged to return to England. In the mean time the abbot had died, and the monks now sought to make Boniface abbot; but he refused the position and went to Rome to the head of Christianity, Pope Gregory II., at whose feet he threw himself, begging for an apostolic mission. The Pope received him with cordiality, admired his zeal, and made him his legate or messenger to Germany, that he might gain it for God. Boniface, with the Pope's blessing, then went to Thuringia, where some time previously Christianity had been planted, but had not taken root; the people had returned to their idols and no longer knew anything of the true God. Boniface put himself to work to weed up the tares and to plant the seed of God's word once more in their hearts; and God blessed his labors. While here he heard of the death of Radbod, the King of the heathens in Friesland, whither he now hastened, meeting there his countryman, St. Willibrord, Archbishop of Utrecht, in union with whom he preached the gospel for three years in this neighborhood, and had the joy of seeing the temples of the idols brought to the ground and the cross everywhere triumphant. But when St. Willibrord who was already quite old, sought to make Boniface his successor, the saint escaped and went once more to Thuringia, where his word penetrated the hearts of the people, and thousands received baptism. To complete and secure the work of the country's conversion, Boniface founded the Monastery of Amœneberg, settled some pious monks in it, and then journeyed to Hessia, where he preached with the same zeal, baptized thousands of idolaters, and built a monastery and hermitage at Wanfried; after which he went to Rome, to give an account of his labors. The Pope heard with joy the report of the conversion of so many idolaters, and in St. Peter's Church, on

November 31, 723, consecrated the saintly man, bishop, and gave him the beautiful name of Boniface, after which the saint joyfully returned to Germany. He continued his labors in Hessia, and worked ceaselessly to exterminate the last traces of paganism. He came once to Geismar in Hessia, to a place which still contained some pagans and some superstitious Christians, who especially venerated an immense oak-tree which was called after the old German god Donar, thunder, the thunder-oak. Startled at this, the saint made up his mind to cut down the tree; the heathens all assembled there, but the Christians also came. Surrounded by his priests, Boniface commenced to cut the oak, while the idolaters raged, and cursed him. Hardly had the saint struck it a few times than the tree, splitting into four parts, fell to the ground. The idolaters believed, that the gods would punish the saint; but when they saw the tree lying on the ground, their hearts were moved and they praised the true God. Then Boniface, raising up his voice, preached to them of their false gods, and won the whole multitude for Christ. Of the wood of the oak, he built a chapel which he dedicated to the Apostle St. Peter, and the place became one of the most flourishing Christian settlements in Hessia. Boniface everywhere found open hearts, built Churches all over the country, and founded, in Thuringia, the Monastery of Ohrdruf. He remained in this monastery for some time until the arrival of priests from England, for whom he had written to assist him; the work was great and the laborers few. Pious and able men soon came from England, men who for the love of Christ and the salvation of souls, left their loved country and all and every thing. Among these were especially prominent Saints Willibald and Wunibald, who were brothers, Witta and Wigbert, and St. Lullus. There came also a great number of maidens: St. Walburga, Lioba, Thecla, Chunehild, Chunitrude, and others. St. Boniface founded everywhere monasteries and convents for the new arrivals, around which the converted natives of the country settled themselves. The light of faith, science, refinement, and culture, spread rapidly; the noblest of the young men hastened to dedicate themselves to the service of the Lord, and to attend the monastery schools, and great men came forth from them. Thus the work of Germany's conversion advanced prosperously, gloriously, to Boniface's great joy, whom Pope Gregory III. elevated to the position of Archbishop of all Germany.

The saint now went through Saxony and Bavaria, everywhere sowing the seed of the word of God, administering the Sacraments, and organizing new congregations. Then he went once more to Rome to make his report, and to procure authority and advice. Returning from Rome, he went by invitation of the Duke of Bavaria, Odilo, into his dominions and divided the country into four dioceses: Saltsbourg, Freising, Ratisbon, and Passaw.

He also, sought to exterminate heathen customs and plant living Christianity in the hearts of the people. He did not, however, remain long in Bavaria, but journeyed back to Hessia, Franconia, Thuringia, still untiringly propagating the religion of Christ. Still further to promote and to preserve the good, which he with his zealous assistants had sowed and fostered, St. Boniface resolved to found an extensive institution which should become a nursery of Christian life, art, and science for all Germany. For the execution of his plan he called upon the priest Sturm, whom he had had educated in the Monastery of Fritzlar, to assist him, gave him his blessing and sent him with two attendants into the depths of the Hessian forests, saying: "Go now into the wilderness of Buchonia, and look for a place suitable for the servants of the Lord; for well able is the Lord to find a place for His own, even in the desert." After a long search, Sturm found a suitable spot near the river Fulda, which place was procured as a gift from the Majordomus, Carlmann. Sturm with seven brothers settled upon it. Within a short time arose the celebrated Benedictine abbey of Fulda, which in a few years contained four hundred monks, and from which went forth in time the most pious archbishops, bishops, priests, and ministers of the faith. Young men, desirous of learning, here found instruction in all departments of science and art, and here were found architects, sculptors, painters, mechanics, farmers, who carried true culture to the remotest districts. But the greatest blessing springing from this famous abbey, was the increasing and the establishing of living Christianity in Middle Germany, the object which St. Boniface held always in view.

In 744, St. Boniface went to France to promote order and unity in the faith, and to suppress the heresies which had arisen there. Now wherever the saint had founded dioceses in Germany, Christianity had taken deep root and already bore glorious fruit; but to make complete this splendid work, there was needed a centre of union and support among the newly erected dioceses. Pope Zacharias, therefore, raised the city Mentz to an archdiocese with Boniface in its chair, to whom all the converted nations in the whole Franconian country were now subject.

When Boniface had humbly subjected himself to the Pope's orders, had established a great number of parish and convent Churches, and well organized religious life, he conferred his episcopal seat at Mentz upon his assistant, Lullus, and with several companions went into Friesland to complete the conversion of the people to Christ. With all the enthusiastic zeal of youth he, now a man of seventy three years, passed through the country, teaching and administering the Sacraments. He had already advanced to the shore of the German Ocean, when his glorious life was closed by a glorious death. In the year 755 he stopped under a pitched tent, in a place called Dorkum, to administer the Sacra-

ment of Confirmation to the lately baptized; but the heathens who saw their idolatrous images falling and the cross everywhere rising, had long been filled with hatred of the saint, threatening to put him to death. Early in the morning of Pentecost, June 5, while Boniface was waiting for the neophytes, that where to be confirmed instead of them appeared a number of armed idolaters of Friesland, who rushed upon him and his companions. Holding the gospel above his head, Boniface received his death-blow, and with him fifty two persons died the death of martyrs. His body found its last resting-place in the Monastery at Fulda, and his memory will last and be held in benediction as long as a Catholic Church remains in Germany.

The Introit of the Mass reads: O ye priests of the Lord, bless the Lord! O ye holy and humble of heart, praise the Lord! O all ye works of the Lord, bless the Lord, praise him and extol him forever. (*Dan.* iii.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, whose grace selected the blessed Boniface for a priest, whose word instructed him for a messenger of the gospel, and whose strength upheld him in perseverance, help us that we may instruct others by our example, and if necessary uphold them by sufferings. Through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

EPISTLE. (ii. *Cor.* i. 3—7.) Brethren: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation; that we also may be able to comfort them who are in all distress, by the exhortation wherewith we also are exhorted by God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so also by Christ doth our comfort abound.—Now whether we be in tribulation, it is for your exhortation and salvation: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation: or whether we be exhorted, it is for your exhortation and salvation, which worketh the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer. That our hope for you may be steadfast: knowing that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so shall you be also of the consolation: in Christ Jesus our Lord.

EXPLANATION. At Ephesus, where St. Paul had preached, a sedition arose among the people, in which the apostle nearly lost his life, but his confidence in God, and the prayers of the people saved him. In his afflictions God gave him wonderful consolations which he received as admonitions to console all who, like

him, were in affliction, or, as he beautifully expresses it, partakers of the sufferings of Christ, who drink from the chalice of Christ's sufferings; but especially those who, like himself, partake of Christ's sufferings in announcing the gospel. St. Boniface was also a partaker of these sufferings, and, like the holy apostle, found great consolation in Christ, who took away from him every bitterness, by giving him the hope of an eternal life, blissful reward in His heavenly kingdom. The inheritance of the servants and friends of God in this world is affliction and sufferings, but these redound to their salvation.—

Take all your sufferings patiently, my dear Christian, from the hand of God; bear them for the love of Jesus; consolation and reward for them will not fail.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xvi. 24—27.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. For he that will save his life, shall lose it: and he that shall lose his life for my sake, shall find it. For what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul? Or what exchange shall a man give for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of the Father with his angels: and then will he render to every man according to his works.

What is meant by denying ourselves?

It means to resist our own improper inclinations, desires, and covetousness, to mortify and repress them, and make our own will conform with the divine.

Man's life is a warfare against implacable enemies: the world, the flesh, and the devil. The most dangerous enemies whom we carry always with us, are: the flesh, the evil desires, covetousness, immoderate selflove, which always draw us away from God and from heavenly things, and urge us to sin. Against these enemies we must fight continually and until death, mortifying our flesh, subduing our senses, and never yielding to improper desires.

What is meant by carrying our cross?

It means, patiently according to the example of Christ to endure the daily inward and outward temptations, sufferings, and afflictions, which God either sends or permits to reach us.

What is meant by: he that will save his life, shall lose it, and he that shall lose his life for my sake, shall find it?

By this is meant, that he who struggles with and overcomes his soul's evil desires and wrong inclinations, so that at last they

are conquered and made to vanish, shall preserve his soul for eternal life, because he keeps his soul free from sin which kills the higher, spiritual life. But he who makes no struggle for his soul, that is, does not mortify its improper inclinations, desires, and passions, but yields to them and satisfies them, will fall into sin and lose eternal salvation. But if the mortification, the self-renunciation, wou'd bring true fruit, it must be undertaken for Christ's sake, for the honor of God, and for our soul's salvation, that is, it must be undertaken in order to become more pleasing to God and more intimately united with Him.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. BENNO, BISHOP.

[June 13.]

T. Benno was born of noble parents in Hildesheim, Lower Saxony, in the year 1010, and was entrusted, when in his fifth year, to the care of St. Bernard, Bishop of Hildesheim, who had him diligently instructed in science, and in that which is still better: in the doctrine of sanctity. In this way Benno grew to be a very pious and intelligent young man. His father desired him to marry; but Benno wished to have nothing to do with marrying, for his heart was given to Jesus, and in order to preserve it from every shadow, he entered, when in his eighteenth year, a Benedictine monastery, where he lived a life of a penitent. Prayer, study and meditation was his only work. When he was thirty years old, he became a priest. After he had filled this holy office for four years, the brethren of his order wished, on account of his piety, to make him their abbot; he wept bitterly, when he heard of their intention, and refused to accept the position, and when forced to accept, he did not cease to pray and entreat them to spare him, until at the end of three months they released him from the position. But by command of the Pope, Leo IX., he was obliged to be made provost in the diocese of Gotzlar, where for seventeen years he labored by doctrine and example with the greatest success; the most venerable bishops and men of the greatest intellect went forth under his direction. In 1066 he was consecrated Bishop of Meissen, and set about at once, to awaken and promote a true, spiritual life in his diocese. He, then, preached the gospel to the idolatrous Slaves on the Elbe, and succeeded in winning this tribe for Christ and leading them into the way of salvation. He saw the most beautiful fruits of a Christian life rise among them, when a storm arose against him which forced him to leave his beloved work. The frivolous and immoral Emperor Henry IV. caused the saintly bishop to be captured and

thrown into prison, because he did not side with the emperor, but adhered to the Pope, Gregory VII., with whom Henry was quarreling. The holy and innocent bishop spent a whole year, submissive to the will of God, in his dungeon; immediately upon his release he returned with burning love to his flock, there to labor anew for the salvation of souls, and to rebuild the Church which had been destroyed.

In the year 1076 the emperor, who wished to usurp all power and dethrone the pope, convened an assembly of all the bishops of Germany; but Benno not regarding the anger of an illadvised emperor, an enemy of the Church, went to Rome, where the pope had called a synod, before which the emperor was to make answer for the evil he had caused. Before leaving his diocese, Benno gave to his two canons the Cathedral keys, with the injunction to throw them into the river, as soon as the emperor was excommunicated, in order to prevent his entrance into the Church. As they had been ordered, when as Henry, was excommunicated by the pope, the canons threw the keys into the river; but they were not lost, but upon the saint's return were found in a large fish that had been caught.

Up to his death, the saint worked unceasingly for the salvation of souls, again devoting himself to the conversion of the heathen Slaves, and everywhere crushing out idolatry. He had directed his diocese, like a faithful shepherd, for forty years and was ninety six years old, when on the 16th of June in the year 1106 he ended his earthly life. Pope Adrian VI. in the year 1583 placed his name on the list of saints.

In the sixteenth century when the false doctrines of Luther found entrance into Saxony and the relics of the saints were everywhere dishonored, the remains of Bishop Benno, at the desire of the pious Bavarian Elector Albrecht V., were brought to Munich to be guarded from dishonor, and are there still enshrined and venerated in the Cathedral of our Lady.

The Introit, Epistle, and Gospel, as on the Feast of St. Nicholas, Dec. 6.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who by the glorious confession of St. Benno, Bishop, hast protected and preserved us, give us the grace to follow him and increase in virtue and enjoy his protection. Through our Lord, Jesus Christ, &c. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. ALOYSIUS.

[June 21.]

T. Aloysius was born on the 9th of March 1568 at Castiglione, a castle of his parents Ferdinand, Marquis of Gonzaga, and Martha Tanna Santena. The pious mother early laid in the heart of her little child the foundation of that holy fear of God which is the beginning of all wisdom, of all true virtue. Would that all parents might follow this mother, and often admonish their children in these words: "Children, fear God, His eye follows you everywhere, day and night; never venture to do evil in the sight of God." St. Aloysius' father, a brave hero, intended to educate his son for a fine warrior, and for this end gave him all kinds of weapons for playthings, even took him, when only seven years of age, into camp. Here the little boy often heard the soldiers use improper words, and not knowing what he was doing, repeated them; but as soon as his tutor reproved him for this, another syllable of a bad word was never heard from his lips. Yet he was all his life grieved for this childish thoughtlessness, and wept over it as over the greatest sin. Having returned to his parents' castle, he made his mother and his tutor most happy by his ready obedience; he always felt the greatest repugnance to the life of a soldier, and more and more desired to devote himself to the service of God. His father perceiving this change, was very much annoyed, but consoled himself by thinking, that if his son would not be a hero, he would at all events become an excellent ruler over his subjects, and, therefore, sent him with his brother Rudolph to study in Florence. There Aloysius with many tears made a general confession, and as he had the most childlike veneration for the Queen of Heaven, he made a vow of perpetual chastity in honor of the most pure and immaculate Virgin; this vow he never violated. In the year 1581 he received from the Archbishop of Milan, Charles Borromeo, his first Communion, for which he had prepared himself with the greatest care, and from this time there was plainly seen in him, a most ardent devotion to the blessed Sacrament, before which he would remain for hours, lost in meditation. From day to day he advanced in the way of perfection, although in compliance with his father's will he spent some time first at the court of the Duke of Mantua, and afterwards at the court of Philip II., King of Spain, where he led, in faithful accordance with his vow, an angelic life. His fear of God, his love of purity, his distrust of himself, his humility, his great confidence in Jesus and Mary, the frequent reception of the Sacraments, and persevering prayer, preserved him

from every failing, though surrounded by courtiers excessively fond of amusements. The desire to devote himself wholly to God, became always greater, and he believed he could best accomplish his wish by entering a religious order. On the feast of the Assumption of the blessed Virgin, he asked that Mary, his mother, would enlighten him. He distinctly heard a voice telling him to join the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) and to make this command known to his father-confessor, who examined the matter and encouraged Aloysius in his resolution. His mother wished him God-speed, but his father would not hear a word about his son's vocation. For three years he refused his consent, which he, however, at the end of that time gave, overcome by his son's perseverance. The youth hastened on the wings of holy eagerness to the house of the Jesuits at Rome, having first joyfully turned over all the power and wealth, which he was to inherit, to his brother Rudolph. He began his novitiate when in his eighteenth year, and soon excelled in punctual obedience and the practice of all virtues all his brother-novices. He took the vows of the order and received minor orders in the year 1587, the graces of which urged him still more zealously in the path of perfection. When in 1591 the pestilence broke out in Rome, it was Aloysius who took the most care of the poor stricken ones, until he was himself infected, and on the 21st of June, in the twenty first year of his age, died the death of the just. The evening before his death, he was visited by the provincial, who came to inquire about his health; with a joyous voice the dying youth said to him: "Father, we go, we go!" "Whither?" asked the other. "To heaven, as I hope through the mercy of God," replied the saint, and there now, in heaven, St. Aloysius shines an angel of innocence.—Happy will it be for you, if you follow him, you will then receive an unfading crown, like that which adorns the brow of this sainted youth.

ON DEVOTION TO ST. ALOYSIUS.

For three hundred years St. Aloysius has received in the holy Catholic Church the greatest veneration as a model of innocence and purity, and innumerable graces have been received by those who have perseveringly sought to imitate him. The Church desires, that especially the young should make this saint their model. Experience proves that many who have done this, have been preserved from the snares of the world, and have carried the crown of virginal purity, untainted, to God. For this end, young men and young women should every day recommend themselves to the protection of this holy youth; should cherish with him a filial veneration for the most blessed, most pure Virgin Mary; should impress upon their heart, as he upon his, the holy fear of God, the distrust of themselves; should shun every occasion of sin, control their senses, especially their eyes, often receive the holy Sacraments, and persevere in prayer; and

should, besides, every year perform the six Sundays' devotion to St. Aloysius, a devotion which in 1739 and 1740 was approved by Pope Clement XII., granting a plenary indulgence for each one of the six Sundays to those who perform the devotion. The devotion, which married as well as single persons can perform, consists in this: that on each of six successive Sundays, the Sacraments of Penance and holy Communion are received with contrition and fervor, some particular virtue of St. Aloysius selected for meditation and imitation, and each time after Communion the prayers for obtaining indulgences, and six "Our Fathers" and "Hail Marys" to be said, with the "Glory be to the Father, &c." in commemoration of the six years St. Aloysius spent in religion. This indulgence of the six Sundays can be gained only once in the year.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH IN HONOR OF ST. ALOYSIUS.

O God, Thou Dispenser of heavenly gifts, who didst unite in the angelic youth Aloysius a wonderful innocence of life, with an equally wonderful penance, grant through his merits and prayers, that we, who have not followed him in innocence, may imitate him in penitence. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE NATIVITY OF ST. JOHN, THE BAPTIST.

[June 24.]

Why is St. John's birthday celebrated instead of the day of his death as of other saints?

Because St. John was sanctified in the womb and was, so to speak, born a great saint, while others only by a life long contest and toil attained to the sanctity, secured to them by their death.

The Introit of the Mass reads: The Lord called me by my name from my mother's womb, and made my mouth like a sharp sword: in the shadow of his hand he hath protected me, and made me as a chosen arrow. (*Isai* xli.) It is good to praise the Lord, and sing to thy name, O thou the Most High. (*Ps.* xci.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who hast honoured this day by the birth of blessed John the Baptist: grant that Thy people may rejoice in spirit, and guide them in the way of eternal salvation. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Isai* xlix. 1—7.) Give ear, ye islands, and hearken ye people from afar. The Lord hath called me from the womb, from the bowels of my mother he hath been mindful of my name. And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword: in the shadow of his hand he hath protected me, and hath made me as a chosen arrow: in his quiver he hath hidden me. And he said to me: Thou art my servant in Israel, for in thee will I glory. And now says the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant: Behold, I have given thee to be the light of the Gentiles, that you mayest be my salvation even to the farthest part of the earth. Kings shall see, and princes shall rise up and adore for the Lord's sake, and for the Holy One of Israel who hath chosen thee.

SHORT EXPLANATION. In his usual, sublime language the prophet here foretells Christ, whom God has made the head and ruler, for the light and salvation of all nations; but the greater part of these words apply also to St. John, as will be seen from his life.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* i. 57—68.) ELIZABETH's full time of being delivered was come, and she brought forth a son. And her neighbours and kinsfolk heard that the Lord hath shewed his great mercy towards her, and they congratulated with her. And it came to pass that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they called him by his father's name Zacharias. And his mother answering said: Not so, but he shall be called John. And they said to her: There is none of thy kindred that is called by that name. And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. And demanding a writing-table, he wrote, saying: John is his name. And they all wondered. And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke blessing God. And fear came upon all their neighbours, and all these things were noised abroad over all the hill-country of Judea: and all they that had heard them, laid them up in their hearts, saying: What an one, think ye, shall this child be? For the hand of the Lord was with him. And Zacharias his father was filled with the Holy Ghost: and he prophesied, saying: Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, because he hath visited and wrought the redemption of his people.

INSTRUCTION. I. It was for Zacharias and Elisabeth, who to their greatest sorrow lived childless to old age, an assurance of God's mercy, that He should then present them with a child and such a holy child. But they had sought to make themselves worthy of this grace by continual prayer, by submission to God's will, by the patient endurance of that which was, at that time, a disgrace, their unfruitfulness, while in the bringing up of this child they manifested their gratitude for his coming.—Childless married people ought to learn from this, that they may pray to God for children, it is true, but they should at the same time be resigned to the will of God. It is a favor to many, that God gives them no children; for if they received the grace to have them, they would bring up their children in an unchristian manner, and thereby risk their own salvation. II. But if God should hear the prayers of such, as He heard the prayers of Zacharias and Elisabeth, they should not fail to thank God and to offer Him the child, promising to bring it up in the fear of the Lord. III. Elisabeths's relations and friends rejoiced with her in her happiness, congratulating her upon it.—If good is given to our fellowmen, we also should rejoice, praise and thank God for it. Thus we participate in their happiness. IV. The name John, which means Blessed of God, was given to the child by God Himself, and John strove to live always in accordance with his name.—We receive from the Church in baptism some saint's name, with the view of our imitating our patron in virtue. Let us see, that we do not bear the name without advantage from it. V. When Zacharias would not believe the angels announcement, he became dumb, now that he believes, his tongue is loosened. (*Luke* i. 18—20.)—When the sinner punished by God, returns and repents, God will either take the punishment from him, or, will give him grace to bear it longer, for the sake of making greater satisfaction. VI. Zacharias praised God loudly and publicly for the grace He had given him.—Woe to those who bury the graces they have received, in forgetfulness, and do not thank God for them. They will receive no more graces, for the hope of the unthankful shall melt away as the winter's ice. (*Wis.* xvi. 29.)

LIFE OF ST. JOHN.

ST. John could not have any greater panegyrist than Christ Himself who at one time calls him an angel (*Matt.* xi. 10.), at another one more than a prophet (*Luke* vii. 28.), again a burning and shining light (*John* v. 35.), by which He sufficiently manifested the greatness of the saint's merit and holiness. Indeed, John was one of the greatest saints, endowed with the most extraordinary gifts, of the Old or New Testament. The Lord had made him great from the womb, while his birth was foretold by an angel. He Himself named him, and sanctified him in the womb, by Christ's presence at the visitation of the blessed Virgin Mary,

so that he was secure from the world's corruption. God drew him in early youth to the desert, where he lived like an angel under God's protection, preparing himself for his future ministry. He led there the most rigorously penitential life; grass-hoppers and wild honey were his only food, a coarse camel's hair garment and a leathern belt around his waist his only covering, wild animals his companions, communion with God by prayer and meditation his entertainment. When he was thirty years of age, God commanded that like the voice of one crying in the wilderness, he should announce the Messiah whom he had baptized in the Jordan, and show the world the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Then, with his exhortations to repentance, St. John as with a sharp sword penetrated men's hearts, seeking to prepare them to receive the Saviour. His exhortations to penance did not consist in mere words, but in an example of the most rigorous mortification, in which he is a light guiding men to salvation.

Finally, when his zeal for the salvation of souls impelled him to tell King Herod to his face, that it is not lawful to take one's brother's wife and live with her, he was cast into prison. When the daughter of this adulterous woman, Herodias, was once dancing before Herod, he was so well pleased with her, that he promised to give her whatever she should ask. Instigated by her impious mother, she demanded the head of John, the Baptist. John was beheaded and rewarded, by a martyr's crown, for all the victories with which he, in whom God had so gloriously manifested Himself, had adorned his career; leaving to all the most beautiful example of innocence, penance, and a heroic zeal for the salvation of souls. And from the days of John, the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away, says Christ. (*Matt.* xi. 12.)

We may be sinners or we may be innocent, and yet, like St. John if we would bring forth worthy fruits of penance and be not excluded from heaven, we must use violence.

ON THE NECESSITY OF EDUCATING CHILDREN.

What an one shall this child be? (*Luke* i. 66.)

THus said the friends, neighbors, and relations of the pious couple Zacharias and Elisabeth, when they saw and heard the wonderful incidents which accompanied the birth of their son, John. What an one shall this child be? so parents often say to each other, when they look upon their own little children, and see how even in early days certain propensities appear in them, causing great wonder. How often would parents be overwhelmed with pain and grief, if they could know in advance, how these tender little ones whose good and remarkable qualities

and whose extraordinary talents they admire, on whom their eyes rest with pleasure, whom every one praises,—how these children would one day hasten to temporal and eternal ruin, preparing for their parents no joy, but many afflictions and much misery! Whence does it come, that so many parents are deceived in the expectations they entertained in regard to their children, that their advancing youth, notwithstanding all the education bestowed upon it, becomes more and more disorderly and impious? It comes, because parents so seldom observe that which is written of the young Tobias: From his infancy (his father) taught him to fear God and to abstain from all sin (*Tob.* i. 10.); because they regard not the apostle's admonition: And you, fathers, bring up your children in the discipline and correction of the Lord (*Eph.* vi. 4.); because they forget, that every child is like a young tree that must be carefully guarded, straightened, bound to a post, trimmed, and protected against insects, wind, and frost; because they remember no longer the wise man's counsel: Instruct thy children, and bow down their necks from childhood (*Eccl.* vii. 25.), and, thou shalt beat thy child with a rod and deliver his soul from hell (*Prov.* xxiii. 14.); because they pay no attention to the words: The child that is left to his own will, bringeth his mother to shame (*Prov.* xxix. 15.), and, he that loveth his son, frequently chastiseth him, that he may rejoice in his latter end, and not grope after the doors of his neighbors (*Eccl.* xxx. 1.), that is, for protection, consolation, and help against the rebellious child. They do not bring the child early to Jesus, the divine friend of children; they do not teach it to fear God and abhor sin above all things; they rejoice in the many talents of the child, but do not seek to direct them to God, their only end; they do not remove from the child all that which poisons and corrupts the innocent heart open to every impression; they neglect to make it pray in early childhood, to make it exercise the necessary Christian virtues, the love of God and their neighbor, humility, obedience, meekness, peacefulness and modesty; in a word: they educate their children for anything rather than for God, the Church, and their country. God, the Church, the country are not satisfied with an education in which attention is paid only to those things which will enable the child to do well in this world, or that will make a great show, and receive place, honor, and praise. It is this false and pernicious education, which is the reason that so many parents complain of their grown up children, that God so often even here, more terribly still in the other world, punishes parents, that the Church has cause to lament, and good men be filled with fear.

If education is to be a truly Christian one, so that parents may rejoice in their children, here and in the next world, and a better generation grow up, education must be founded on religion, must

commence with God and end with God. Parents should consider, that their children are a precious trust, which God has confided to them, and which he will in strict account demand back again unhurt on the Day of Judgment; they should remember, that their children are created for heaven, are redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus, and sanctified by the Holy Ghost in baptism. In the earliest childhood, Christian parents should make their children acquainted with God, the Highest Good, keep them attentive to devout prayer, especially imprint the holy fear of God upon their hearts, lead them early to Jesus, often place His beautiful example before them, infuse His holy teachings into their hearts, instruct them in sincere veneration to the blessed Virgin Mary, daily recommending them to this beloved Mother. Being, as it were, the guardian angels of their children, parents should watch day and night over the innocence and purity of their hearts, remove them from association with bad children and degenerate grown people, be attentive to watch all their steps, be vigilant concerning all their omissions and commissions, banish from their knowledge all bad example, improper words and songs, and bad books. If they truly love their children, they will not permit obstinacy, stubbornness, or disobedience in them, and should: withhold not correction from a child (*Prov.* xxiii. 13.), make use of strict discipline united with affection, and suffer no ill manners to grow with them. They should early bring their children to the practice of Christian virtues, and teach them to mortify their evil inclinations; often exhort them, when they have arrived at the proper age, to receive the holy Sacraments; see that their children do not spend their youth in idleness, but thoroughly learn all that, which is necessary for them to know, not superficially as half educated, half instructed persons, who can gossip about everything, but are at the same time empty headed; they should, and this is especially needful, go in advance of their children in good example, cooperate with the priests and teachers, and thus strive to bring up good, pious, religious, virtuous children of God, members for the Church and citizens for the country.

Woe to the parents who do not educate their children for God and heaven! What fear and terror will come upon them on the Judgment-Day, when God will demand back, pure and unharmed, the children He confided to them, when parents must acknowledge, that through their fault their children have been excluded from the country of God, have gone to eternal perdition and are lost forever!

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL, APOSTLES.

[June 29.]

PEter, formerly called Simon, from Bethsaida in Galilee, was a son of Jonas and a brother of Andrew, by whom he was brought to Christ. After the great draught of fishes, when our Lord said to him and Andrew: Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men, Peter followed the Saviour constantly. Jesus so loved him, that He made him the witness of his most secret and important actions. Peter was present, when Christ appeared in His glory on Mount

Tabor, when He raised the daughter of Jairus to life, and when He sweat blood in the agony on Mount Olivet. Peter was also present at the miraculous draught of fishes, which was a figure of the multitudes which Peter was to bring, by means of the holy Gospel, to the kingdom of God, for Christ called him a fisher of men, and afterwards, because Peter recognized and professed Him to be the Son of the living God, Christ named him Peter, made him the head of the apostles and of the entire Church, made him His vicar and visible representative upon earth, promising to build His Church upon him as upon a rock, gave him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and commanded him to feed His sheeps and His lambs. Peter loved our Lord above all things; because of his love he wished to remain with Christ upon Mount Tabor, to keep Him from His suffering, and in his love desired to die with Christ. He certainly showed the greatest courage when Christ was taken, following Him even into the house of the high priest. But alas, the instability of man! There Peter three times denied the Lord. But he instantly, at one glance of the Redeemer, wept bitterly over this sin, and never ceased to lament it while he lived. He atoned for it by suffering much for Christ. Under the Emperor Nero he was crucified for his faith, at Rome, and by his own request with his head towards the ground, because he did not consider himself worthy to die as Christ did.

O that all sinners would seek by such penance to turn their evil into good!

PRAYER TO ST. PETER. O God, who from a poor fisherman made St. Peter prince of the apostles and head of Thy Church, we beseech Thee through his intercession to make us true lambs of Thy flock. Grant, that we may hear his voice, follow his doctrine, and walk in his steps, until we reach that happy pasture where the good Shepherd, Thine only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, whom St. Peter represented on earth, reigns with Thee and the Holy Ghost forever. Amen.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF ST. PAUL.

PAul, before his conversion called Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin, was born at Tarsus in Cilicia, and was a pupil of Gamaliel. As he had the most zealous attachment for the Jewish law, he was exasperated against the Christians. However, when hurrying to Damascus to persecute them, he was converted by the Lord on the way and called to be an apostle. *[See the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul.]* His unwearied labors in the vineyard of the Lord, after his conversion, the sufferings which he endured upon his apostolic journeys, and the dangers and persecutions through which he passed in different countries, cannot be described. The

zeal and constancy with which he confessed and preached the faith, though in chains and bands, though scourged and beaten, in hunger and thirst, and through innumerable dangers, are almost incredible. He was so humble, that he regarded himself as the least of the apostles, and wished to be held as the very offscourings of the earth. After a long and hard-contested fight, he finally finished his career; having zealously preached the faith in all directions and still more zealously practised it, he won the crown of justice. On the same day and at the same place, in Rome, in which Peter was crucified, he was beheaded, by command of the Emperor Nero. Thus God tries and rewards true virtue. Paul in his life as after death worked numberless miracles; even his handkerchief, like St. Peter's shadow, healed sickness and expelled devils. He had so deeply impressed the name of Jesus in his heart, that it was almost continually on his lips, for "out of the fulness of the heart, the mouth speaketh."

Would that we loved Jesus, as Paul loved Him, then we would, like St. Paul, be ready to do and suffer much for Jesus.

PRAYER TO ST. PAUL. O St. Paul, chosen vessel of the Lord, who didst carry the name of Jesus to kings and heathens, didst suffer so much for Christ, and wast never allured from the love of Him: like a brave soldier of Christ, thou hast fought a good battle, a zealous teacher thou hast preached far and wide the true faith, and the just and merciful God has, therefore, rewarded thee with the crown of justice: pray to God for me, that I who because of my sins am an instrument of wrath, may become an instrument of honor, adorned with the Christian virtues, with which thou art already decorated. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The Introit of the Mass consists of Peter's words, spoken after his deliverance from the prison at Jerusalem: Now I know in very deed that the Lord hath sent his angel and delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews. (*Acts* xii. 11.) O Lord, thou hast proved me, and hast known me: thou hast known my sitting down, and my rising up. (*Ps.* cxxxviii.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who hast consecrated this day by the martyrdom of Thy glorious apostles Peter and Paul; grant, that Thy Church may in all things follow their directions, by whom was laid the foundation of religion. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Acts* xii. 1—11.) In those days: Herod the king stretched forth his hand to afflict some of the Church. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. And seeing that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to take up Peter also. Now it was in the days of azymes. And when he had apprehended him he cast him into prison, delivering him to four files of soldiers to be kept, intending after the pasch to bring him forth to the people. Peter therefore was kept in prison. But prayer was made without ceasing by the Church unto God for him. And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him: and a light shined in the room: and he striking Peter on the side raised him up, saying: Arise quickly. And the chains fell off from his hands. And the angel said to him: Gird thyself, and put on thy sandals. And he did so. And he said to him: Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And going out he followed him, and he knew not that it was true which was done by the angel: but thought he saw a vision. And passing through the first and second ward, they came to the iron gate that leadeth to the city, which of itself opened to them. And going out, they passed on through one street: and immediately the angel departed from him. And Peter coming to himself, said: Now I know in very deed that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

INSTRUCTION. I. This Herod, a grand-son of Herod the Great, under whom Christ was born, and who murdered the holy Innocents, was a zealous Jew, and to please the Jews persecuted the Christians, and caused Peter to be imprisoned with the intention of having him publicly executed after Easter, for the amusement of the people.—How shameful it is to do wrong, to murder a man in order to oblige others! See how deeply the desire to please can lead into corruption! Take care to commit no sin for the sake of pleasing others; for he who seeks to please men, cannot be a servant of Christ, says the Apostle Paul. II. The Church, that is, the priests and the faithful, prayed to God continually for the liberation of St. Peter, and their prayers were heard.—Let us pray for one another, especially for sinners, that God may free them from the chains of the evil one. III. Peter

slept calmly in prison, for his conscience was at peace, and he confided himself entirely to God's protection.— The innocent is calm in every peril and need, the bad only have no peace. IV. God sent an angel to Peter, who told him to rise up quickly, gird himself, put on his shoes, and follow him.— If thy guardian angel warns thee to rise from the sleep of sin, then rise at once, return to thyself, like the prodigal son, break the bonds that bind thee to sin, gird thyself with the strong resolution to sin no more, put on thy shoes, that is, make the firm purpose to follow Christ. Dangerous indeed it is, not to attend the warnings of the good angel, and to continue to sleep!

[The Gospel as on the Feast of St. Peter's Chair at Rome.]

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF THE VISITATION OF MARY.

[July 2.]

Why is this festival called the Visitation of Mary?

Because on this day Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth of whom the angel said, that she should in her old age be blessed with a son.

[The Introit of the Mass as on the Festival of the Conception.]

LESSON. (*Cant.* ii. 8—14.) Behold, he cometh, leaping upon the mountains, skipping over the hills. My beloved is like a roe or a young hart. Behold, he standeth behind our wall, looking through the windows, looking through the lattices. Behold, my beloved speaketh to me: Arise, make haste, my love, my dove, my beautiful one, and come. For winter is now past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers have appeared in our land, the time of pruning is come, the voice of the turtle is heard in our land: the fig-tree hath put forth her green figs, the vine in flower yield their sweet smell. Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and come. My dove in the clefts of the rock, in the hollow places of the wall, shew me thy face, let thy voice sound in my ear: for thy voice is sweet, and thy face comely.

EXPLANATION. The Church here applies this lesson to Christ's love for His Mother, from whom He received His flesh. In the beautiful words of this day's lesson, thou mayst therefore sympathize with the love which Jesus and Mary had for each other, and consider, that Jesus so loves thy soul, that He calls on

thee to rise up, that is, to leave the earthly thoughts, and come to Him, to live for Him only, and entertain thyself, in prayer only with Him, like Mary who because of this was so beautiful in His sight, and make the following

PETITION. O Jesus, sweet Bridegroom of my soul, come, hasten with Thy grace to visit my soul, that she may be purified and sanctified by Thy love, and prepare her for Thy worthy dwelling, visit me as thou once didst visit, with Mary, the child John and sanctify him. Do not permit my ears ever to close to Thy warning voice, but grant that I may always obey Thy holy admonitions, and thus become ever more and more pleasing to Thee.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* i. 39—47.) At that time: Mary rising up in those days, went into the hill country with haste into a city of Juda. And she entered into the house of Zachary, and saluted Elizabeth. And it came to pass, that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. And she cried out with a loud voice, and said: Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed art thou that hast believed, because those things shall be accomplished that were spoken to thee by the Lord. And Mary said: My soul doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

INSTRUCTION. I. Mary rising up went into the hill country, and truly, as St. Luke says, with haste. "And tell us now, O Mary," exclaims St. Alphonsus Ligouri, "why dost thou hasten so?" "I have a duty to fulfil," she replies, "which the love of my neighbor requires. I go to assist a pious family."—In like manner you also should hasten to carry help and consolation to your neighbor. II. Mary visited her cousin not from inconsiderate curiosity, not according to the custom of the world, but from love, and especially that she might sanctify John.—From such motives we should make all our visits. They should aim always only at God's honor and the spiritual advantage of our fellowmen, they should not come false politeness or bad intentions, which alas! are too often the motives of worldly visits. III. Mary in this visit gives a special example of humility, when she, although the Mother of God, visits the mother of His servant John, saluting her first, and rendering her for three months the services of a maid.—Learn from Mary, and sincerely ask her to obtain you the virtue of humility. IV. When Mary was praised by her aunt and called blessed, she turned the praises at once to God and gives Him all the honor.—When we do any good, whe should always give the honor to God, not to ourselves, as the prophet says: Not to us, not to us, but to thy name the honor! V. When Mary entered into Zachary's house, wonderful grace entered with her. The infant John leaped up for joy, because sanctifying grace was then given to him, before he was born; Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost, and Zachary, St. John's father, was soon to be consoled by regaining the use of speech.

"It is then but true," here exclaims St. Alphonsus Ligouri, "that through thy mediation, my Queen and Mother, God's graces are dispensed and souls sanctified! Forget not me, O my beloved Mother Mary, forget not me, thy servant, who loves thee and places upon thee all his hopes!"

EXPLANATION OF THE MAGNIFICAT, OR, MY SOUL DOTH SANCTIFY THE LORD.

What does this canticle contain?

THE praise of God, Mary's gratitude and humility. In it she praises God, and rejoices, that He saw the humility of His handmaid, and made her the Mother of His only begotten Son, and, therefore, all generations shall call her blessed. She says, that God's mercy is great from generation to generation to those that fear Him: He humbles the proud and casts them down from their seat, which they had erected in their conceit, but gives His grace to the humble and exalts them; He richly fills those who hunger and thirst after virtue and heavenly treasures, but lets those who think themselves rich, go away empty; He receives all true Israelites for His worshipers and leads them to the salvation, which He promised to their fathers. "God is mighty," says St. Augustine, "if thou exaltest thyself, He flies from thee; if thou humblest thyself, He descends to thee."

SUPPLICATION. O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God! who didst descend from the heights of heaven into the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary, didst remain for nine months in it, deigning to visit and sanctify St. John through her, grant, that we may participate, through the practice of good works and especially of humility, in the fruits of Thy holy Incarnation.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. ULRIC.

[July 4.]

T. Ulric was born, about the year 890, of noble parents, who according to the custom of that time, gave him, when a boy, into the hands of the Benedictine Fathers of St. Gallen in Switzerland, to be educated.

While being instructed in the sciences at the monastery, he became acquainted with St. Wiboroda, a hermitess of that neighborhood, who urged him to the preservation of purity. She gave him a girdle, which she her-

self had made, to remind him, that she had girded him with the girdle of continence, and he should, therefore, shun all intimate acquaintance with women. Wiboroda's words made such an impression upon him, that from that time he practised the severest penance. When he was about to choose his state of life, she advised him to return to his home, for he was to become a bishop, but would first have much to suffer for God. Ulric, therefore, returned to his parents; he did not remain long with them, but placed himself for further education into the hands of the wise and pious Adalbero, Bishop of Augsburgh, who ordained him priest and made him a canon. Before accepting this position, Ulric made a pilgrimage to Rome, to the graves of the Apostles Peter and Paul, there to pray sincerely for the grace to fruitfully administer his priestly office in accordance with God's will. He lived for several years after his return in quiet and solitude until the year 924, when he was made Bishop of Augsburgh.

At that time, great gloom hung over the country; on every side was to be seen only misery and distress. The Huns, a barbarian tribe, had made predatory incursions into this section and made every thing desolate; the Churches were in ruins, the houses plundered, the priests chained, the towns ransacked, and the inhabitants scattered. Still St. Ulric did not despair; trusting in God's help, he called together his scattered flock, rebuilt the ruined houses and Churches, and to carry spiritual and material aid in all directions, he himself visited his entire diocese, consoling, advising, and instructing as he went.

By untiring labor he had succeeded in preparing the way for a new Christian life in his diocese, when the Huns again advanced as far as the Black Forest, burning and slaying everywhere. They crossed the Lech, burned the Church of St. Afra the Martyr, and laid siege to the poorly fortified city of Augsburgh, in which St. Ulric held his episcopal see. Fear and terror seized upon the people, they were lost if God did not help them. But in God's help St. Ulric trusted perfectly; he gathered the people into the Church, remained day and night with them in it, and inspired the soldiers, who were ready to fight the enemy, to the holy battle. He gave them all holy Communion just before the attack, and then in his episcopal dress and his stole, he put himself at their head to meet the enemy. The battle was most violent, the soldiers fought valiantly, and drove the barbarians back to their camp. In the mean time, the German Emperor Otho I. came with a powerful army to their assistance, and a terrible battle was fought, in which the Huns were conquered and routed. This victory was universally attributed to the prayers of St. Ulric. He was now busily healing the wounds which the war had made, a work to which he bravely applied himself. He was an angel of consolation to the poor, to the widows and orphans; he restored order, and again rebuilt the Churches which had been burned; announced the word

of God upon all occasions, and carried help and consolation even into the lowest huts of poverty.

God rewarded his holy life by the gift of working miracles. With the sign of the cross and holy chrism he often healed the sick; he once crossed a rapid stream, without being wetted by it, although his horse was swimming in the water. A detracter of the saint was once by a miracle brought to shame. It chanced, that one Thursday St. Ulric was visited by his friend, the saintly Conrad, Bishop of Constance. Being engaged in pious conversation concerning the divine mysteries, the two friends, without touching the supper on the table, let the night slip away, and in the morning they were found still at the table by a messenger, who brought a letter from the duke of Bavaria to Ulric. Before the messenger left, Ulric gave him some of the meat which was prepared for the untouched supper. The messenger hastened to the duke with the information, that Bishop Ulric ate meat on Friday, in proof of which he was about to show a piece of the meat which he had brought away for this purpose, when to his terror he found it changed into fish. The gossip was silenced. St. Ulric is, on account of this incident, generally painted with a fish in his hand.

The saint had now reached an advanced age; labor, night-watches, fasting, and other penances had consumed his strength; he saw his end approaching, and, therefore, gave away the little he possessed, some clothes and ten silver pieces, to the priests and the poor. On the 19*th* of June in 973, he once more celebrated Mass in his episcopal robes, and then prepared himself with great devotion for his long desired death, which he hoped would be on the vigil of the Festival of St. Peter and Paul, so much that he had himself dressed after vespers of that day in his grave clothes. After vespers he was raised from the floor on which he had lain, and sighed: "O St. Peter, thou hast not accomplished my desire!" He lived for four days after this, becoming ever more united with God. On the fifth day before dawn, he had himself lain upon ashes, then he recommended his soul into God's hands, and died calmly in the Lord, having reached his eighty third year. He was solemnly canonized by Pope John XV., in 993.

For the Introit, Epistle and Gospel, and their Explanations, see the Feast of St. Nicholas.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who knowest, that of our own strength we cannot be sustained, grant us, that by the intercession of the holy Bishop Ulric, we may be protected from all adversities. Through Jesus Christ, &c.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. WILLIBALD, BISHOP,

[July 7.]

T. Willibald came from England, was the son of St. Richard the King, and brother of St. Winnibald and St. Walburga, and a near relative of St. Boniface, the Apostle of Germany. When he was three years old, he was attacked by a dangerous illness, and his parents laid him down before a crucifix, vowing, if he recovered, to devote their beloved child to the Lord. Their prayers were heard. The pious parents always looked upon their boy as a special gift of heaven, and had him educated in the Monastery of Waltheim, where he advanced in charming innocence, learned rapidly, and distinguished himself by his interior piety. Thousands of Catholics at that time made pilgrimages to the graves of St. Peter and St. Paul, the Apostles, at Rome, and the ardent desire to make this pilgrimage, there to serve God in quiet solitude, was awakened in the heart of the pious youth Willibald. He went, accompanied by his saintly father and his brother Winnibald; but the father died on the way. Willibald buried him, and then prosecuting his journey arrived at Rome on St. Martin's day in the year 721. Willibald and his brother visited with fervent devotion, all the sacred places in the city, especially the graves of the martyrs, and received the habit of a religious.

Willibald soon after made a pilgrimage to the holy Land, where he suffered many trials, and after seven years returned to Italy, and for some time led a holy, peaceful life in the celebrated Benedictine Monastery Mount Casino. But God now wished to put his light upon an elevation, so that he might show others the way to heaven.

In the year 738 St. Boniface was at Rome to visit Pope Gregory III., and there met St. Willibald, the sanctity of whose face so impressed St. Boniface, that he besought the pope to permit him to have the young saint as an assistant in his apostolic labors in Germany. The pope granted this request, and Willibald accompanied his saintly cousin to Germany, where he was ordained priest, and required by Boniface to preach the Lord Christ to the benighted heathens of the province of Germany. Willibald commenced his labors with the greatest zeal; he preached in Bavaria and Franconia, but especially in Eichstadt, where, at that time, there was but a chapel and a few huts, for the Huns had destroyed the city. But he worked untiringly for the salvation of souls, and God was with him; the seed he sowed, bloomed gloriously, and Boniface had the satisfaction of founding the diocese

of Eichstadt, of which Willibald was consecrated the first bishop in the year 741. As bishop Willibald redoubled his activity, planted the seed of the word of God untiringly in all hearts, gathered pious priests from religious orders around him, and with them spread the richest blessings far and wide. He founded a monastery and a convent of the rule of St. Benedict, at Heidenheim, one for his brother Winnibald, and the other for his sister Walburga, to which he often retired, that he might pray in solitude and collect new strength for his work. He gave the priests and the faithful the most beautiful example; his meekness and patience were inexhaustible, his zeal indefatigable, his love of the poor boundless. He possessed a special gift of consoling and comforting the afflicted; his fasting was rigorous, even in illness he was not willing to omit it, and continued it to old age. Finally, wearied of life, and full of desire to behold God, he died, rich in virtue, at Eichstadt, on the 7*th* of July 786, at the age of eighty seven years. His sacred remains rest in a handsome Church, which Bishop Hildebrand caused to be built in that city, in 1270.

The Introit, Epistle, and Gospel, as on the Feast of St. Nicholas, December 6.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God whose will it was, that St. Willibald should have place among Thy people to be, by precept and example, the salvation of those whom he led: guide by his intercessions all shepherds of Thy Church and the flocks entrusted to them, on the way to eternal salvation, so that all, by Thy grace, may desire that which is pleasing to Thee, and with their whole strength accomplish it. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. KILIAN, BISHOP AND MARTYR.

[July 8.]

T. Kilian was born in Scotland, of noble parents. According to the custom of that time, his parents had him educated at a monastery, where he was brought up in the fear of God, and his mind at the same time well cultivated in the sciences. He assumed the habit of the Benedictines, and was ordained priest. In his quiet cell he meditated often on the infinite love of the divine Saviour, who to save us poor men, became Himself a man and died for us on the cross, until the ardent desire was aroused in the saint to carry the mes-

sage of salvation to those nations to whom Jesus and his love were entirely unknown, and to win their hearts for Christ. With this object he left his native country, his parents and friends, about the year 685, and with eleven companions who shared his intentions, crossed the sea and safely landed in France, but not to stay here, for Kilian's aim was Germany, where the most abominable idolatry still reigned. He reached the neighborhood of Wurzburgh, where he settled with the priest Colonat and the deacon Totnan, and planted the cross on one of the neighboring hills which is called the Mount of the Cross even to this day.

The old Franks were devoted to the war and the chase, they lived in gloomy forests, dressed in the skin of animals, supported themselves by plunder and the chase, and worshiped, under the name of Hulda, Diana, godness of hunting; they offered their sacrifices, which were often human beings, to their idols under great oaks. The light of Christianity had, it is true, once penetrated to them from France, but it had been soon extinguished, and the dark night of paganism completely enveloped their beautiful country.

As soon as Kilian and his companions had learned the language of the country, made themselves acquainted with its customs, and had seen what a rich harvest could be reaped by preaching the gospel here, he went to Rome to Conon, who was Pope at that time, to obtain authority to administer the word. Conon received him with pleasure, granted his request, consecrated him bishop, and dismissed him with his blessing.

In the inclement season of the winter of 687 the saint returned to Wurzburgh, and immediately commenced the holy work. He preached the word of the Lord to the ignorant with heavenly eloquence, and God blessed his zeal. A great number received baptism. Among these was the Duke of Franconia, named Theobald, who became converted to Christ, and received in baptism the name Gosbert; his subjects followed his example, and Kilian had the joy of seeing in the places where sacrifices smoked on the altars of idols, the cross erected and the purest and holiest offering made to the true God.

But his joy was soon overshadowed. Duke Gosbert had married his sister in law, Gailana, and Kilian required the breaking up of this marriage which was contrary to God's commandment. The duke promised to comply, but his passionate, impious wife would not hear of a divorce, resolved on the death of the saint, and in the absence of the duke who was engaged in a war, hired two barbarians to murder Kilian and his companions. The night before his death, Kilian had a vision, by which he was made aware, that his death was at hand. He called his companions, and said: "Let us prepare ourselves for the coming of the Lord, for he is at the door." Then they all three prayed and recommended their

souls to the Lord, and behold, about midnight the assassins rushed into the saint's dwelling. Kilian bravely met them, and with his companions fearlessly received the death-blow; this was in the year 689. To conceal the shameful deed, the bodies of the slain and their priestly garments and sacred utensils were thrown into a pit; but the just God brought the whole to light. One of the murderers became insane, and ran through the streets of the city in a frenzy, crying out: "O Kilian, Kilian! how horribly thou dost persecute me. I see the sword red with thy blood, hanging over my head!" and then, tearing his flesh with his teeth, he died a most agonizing death. The other murderer stabbed himself with his own sword. Gailana became a lunatic and came to a fearful end. The remains of the holy martyrs were found and brought by Bishop Burkard to the Cathedral of Wurzburgh.

The Introit of the Mass on his Feast reads: The salvation of the just is from the Lord: and he is their protector in the time of trouble. (*Ps.* xxxvi.) Be not emulous of evil doers: nor envy them that work iniquity. Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who, by the yearly solemnity of Thy holy Martyrs Kilian, Colonat, and Totnan comfortest us Thy people; mercifully grant, that, as we rejoice at their merits, we may likewise be encouraged by their examples. Thro'.

The Epistle as on the Feast of St. Sebastian, and the Gospel as on the Feast of All Saints.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. HENRY, AND HIS SPOUSE ST. CUNIGUNDE.

[July 15 and March 3.]

T. Henry, surnamed the Pious, was born in the castle Abbach at Ratisbon, in the year 972. He was baptized and educated by the Bishop St. Wolfgang, who sowed in his heart a seed which brought forth excellent fruit.

St. Wolfgang's care for Henry did not cease even with the bishop's death. For once, when Henry was praying at St. Wolfgang's grave in the Church of St. Emmeram at Ratisbon, the saint appeared to him and told him to look at the wall behind him, which he did and read there the words: Post sex, "After six," from which Henry concluded, that he was to die at the end of six days and really prepared himself

earnestly for death. But the six days passed and he still lived; he then supposed it to mean that he must die after six months; he lived therefore most penitently, but the six months passed and he continued well; he then thought, it would be after six years, and continued his penitential life for six years. At the end of that time he did not die, but was made emperor. In 995 he married, to please his parents, Cunigunde, daughter of the Count Siegfried, a lady who equalled him in piety. The pious couple on their wedding-day made a vow of chastity, to live like Mary and Joseph; this vow they faithfully observed. The life of the Emperor Henry passed in almost continual war, into which he was forced; but even in battle he did not forget to honor and advance the cause of the Church, in which he was assisted by the prayer and advice of the saintly Cunigunde. Always confiding in the intercession of St. George, St. Lawrence, and St. Adrian, he fought victoriously against the Bohemians, Slavonians; as often as he went into battle, he prayed to God, who always visibly assisted him, for which Henry proved himself grateful from his heart. He and Cunigunde founded innumerable Christian institutions, and while he fought victoriously in the wars, Cunigunde lived at home in peaceful seclusion. The nuns and the poor were her favorites; her hand was always open in benevolence. She was never idle, was not ashamed to attend to the work of her household, and when her occupations permitted, she spent much time in her room praying and meditating. But though she led a pious life, slander did not fail to reach her. Henry was told, that she had violated her marriage fidelity, and he thoughtlessly listened to her calumniators and reproached her concerning it; but she proved her innocence by walking, under the eyes of her husband and many witnesses, barefooted over red-hot plough-shares, without being in the least injured. This miracle so impressed the emperor, that he strove in every way to make amends for the insult which he had given to his pure spouse, with whom he ever lived in peace as with a good sister. Both heartily loved God, and found their pleasure in the serving the Church and the poor. Henry founded the diocese of Bamberg and built its splendid Cathedral; Cunigunde founded the convent of Kauffungen, to which place she retired after Henry's death, there to pass in retirement the last days of her life, and there to die a holy death in 1040. When she was dying, she saw that the nuns were preparing a valuable cloth with which to cover her body, and said with a broken voice: "I am unworthy of such ornaments; I wore a rich garment at my marriage with a mortal man, but my present, humble dress is better fitted for the bride of the eternal Lord; bury my body in this, by my lord and brother, the Emperor Henry." Henry died sixteen years before her; he was attacked by a severe sickness at the Castle of Gruningen, while on a journey to Saxony. When he saw his end drawing near, he sent for the Empress Cunigunde, and when she stood

by his bed, he took her by the hand, and said in presence of his relations and the greatest nobles of his court: "Behold, as you, or rather Christ, gave her to me, I give her back, a pure maiden, to Christ our Lord and to you." He soon after, on the night of the 13th of July in the year 1024, died a peaceful death. His sacred remains and those of Cunigunde, were brought to Bamberg and interred in the Cathedral.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH ON THE FEAST OF ST. HENRY.

O God, who didst this day remove blessed Henry Thy confessor from his earthly throne to an eternal kingdom: we humbly beseech Thee, that as by the assistance of Thy grace, he was proof against all the temptations of the world, so we may follow his example in withstanding all the flatteries of this world, and serve Thee with clean hearts. Thro'.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH ON THE FEAST OF ST. CUNIGUNDE.

Give ear to us, O God our Saviour, that as we celebrate with joy the solemnity of blessed Cunigunde Thy Virgin, so we may improve in the affection of piety. Thro'.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FESTIVAL OF THE SCAPULAR.

[Third Sunday in July.]

His festival was sanctioned in the year 1587 by Pope Sixtus V. for the Order of Carmelites; after some time it was celebrated, by permission of several popes, in many Christian countries, and was finally in the year 1726 ordered by Pope Benedict XIV. to be observed in the whole Church.

This festival has two names arising from its history and origin: The Festival of the Scapular, or the Feast on Commemoration of the blessed Virgin of Mount Carmel. The first comes from the legend, that in the beginning of the thirteenth century the sixth general of the Carmelite Order, Simon Stock, received the scapular*) (shoulder dress) from the blessed Virgin,

*) This scapular consists of two small pieces of cloth with pictures of the blessed Virgin upon them, which are blessed, and worn over the shoulders, hanging upon the breast and back.

which should be to him and to all who carried it, a badge of her special protection, and that Mary afterwards appeared to Pope John XXII. and advised him to give more indulgences to this Order than he had already granted in 1322. The second name is given, because this festival originated in the Carmelite Order, which even in the time of the apostles had a monastery on Mount Carmel, from which the name Carmelite is derived. From this originated the Confraternity of the Scapular, as it is called, whose members bound themselves to especially venerate Mary, the Mother of Jesus, as their Mother, and labor under her protection to work out their salvation by a pious life, and as badge of this wear a little blessed scapular with the picture of the blessed Virgin upon it, and daily say certain prayers. The Church, therefore, has the decided intention by the observance of this Feast of the Scapular and by the existence of this Confraternity, to direct and encourage the faithful anew to properly honor the Mother of our Saviour, and to seek her powerful intercession, so that they may find their salvation, after the example of the Blessed, not only in this world, but especially in the other. But it is to be observed, that the carrying of a blessed scapular does not ensure happiness; this is gained only by a faithful, pious, Christian life, by the love of God and of our neighbor.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who hast honored the Order of the Carmelites with the singular title of the blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God: mercifully grant that we who solemnize this her commemoration, may by the aid of her prayers arrive at eternal happiness. Thro'.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. MARY MAGDALEN.

[July 22.]

According to the old and settled tradition of the Church, St. Mary Magdalen was the sister of Martha and of Lazarus, and was that sinner who anointed the Saviour's feet. She was moved to penance by the sermons of Jesus, and on account of her deep, true, loving sorrow, Jesus forgave her sins, and she became from henceforth the most faithful and zealous servant of the Lord. She was one of those women who continually accompanied our Lord and served him according to their power. She stood with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and Mary, the wife of Cleophas, under the cross of Jesus; she was the first at the sepulchre after the Sabbath, and there saw Jesus, whom she

thought the gardener, until He kindly made Himself known to her, and commanded her, to announce the news of His resurrection to the apostles and the remainder of the disciples, and to tell them that He should ascend to His and their God. From the time when Magdalen hastened to the apostles with the joyful message of the Lord, the gospel is silent concerning her, and the approved memorials of Church History do not mention anything certain of her; but that she was accepted among the happy children of God, is testified to by the Church which celebrates her feast on this day.

In the Introit of the Mass, the Church exclaims in Magdalen's name: The wicked have waited for me to destroy me: but I have understood thy testimonies, O Lord. I have seen an end of all perfection: thy commandment is exceedingly broad. (*Ps.* cxviii.) Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, O Lord, we may be assisted by the prayers of blessed Mary Magdalen: at whose request Thou wast pleased to raise Lazarus from the dead, after he had been four days in the grave. Who liveth.

LESSON. (*Cant.* iii. 2—5.; viii. 6—7.) I will rise and will go about the city: in the streets and the broad ways, I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, and I found him not. The watchmen who keep the city, found me. Have you seen him whom my soul loveth? When I had a little passed by them, I found him whom my soul loveth; I held him, and I will not let him go, till I bring him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that bore me. I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes and harts of the fields, that you stir not up, nor wake my beloved till she please. Put me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thy arm: for love is strong as death: jealously, is hard as hell, the lamps therefore are lamps of fire and flames. Many waters cannot quench charity, neither can the hoods drown it: if a man should give all the substance of his house for love, he shall despise it as nothing.

EXPLANATION. The holy fathers understand by the bride in this lesson, the soul which seeks her bridegroom Jesus. She arises from the bed of long negligence, and examines in her mind the city of God, that is, the Church; she meditates on the lives of the saints, willing by following them to find Him whom she loves, but she does not find Him at once. She comes to the watchmen of the city, the vicars, pastors, confessors of

the Church, who are ordered by God to lead the erring ones to Jesus. She asks of them, where and how she can find her loved One, and soon she finds Him, and when she has found Him, she encloses Him in her deepest heart and is careful never to lose Him again. And the soul that lives in Jesus, feels so sweet a repose, that she, so to speak, falls into a deep sleep, in which nothing earthly disturbs her, and whosoever rests in God, God guards in peaceful quiet. God requires of her to imprint His love like a seal on her heart and on her arms, that is, to think of Him continually and perform all for love of Him. This love is strong as death, consuming everything, and as jealous for God as a glowing fire; the light of faith must burn ever in the heart, and affliction, temptation, trials must not diminish or extinguish the affection. The soul inspired by such love, submits itself entirely to God, and openly shows her love by brave deeds. Such a love had Magdalen; for such a love we should daily pray, following her example.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* vii. 36—50.) At that time: One of the Pharisees desired him to eat with him. And he went into the house of the Pharisee, and sat down to meat. And behold, a woman that was in the city, a sinner, when she knew that he sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment: and standing behind at his feet, she began to wash his feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. And the Pharisee, who had invited him, seeing it, spoke within himself saying: This man, if he were a prophet, would know surely who and what manner of woman this is that touched him, that she is a sinner. And Jesus answering, said to him: Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee. But he said: Master, say it. A certain creditor had two debtors, the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And whereas they had not wherewith to pay, he forgave them both. Which therefore of the two loveth him most? Simon answering, said: I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And he said to him: Thou hast judged rightly. And turning to the woman, he said unto Simon: Dost thou see this woman? I entered into thy house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she with tears hath washed my feet and with her hairs hath wiped them. Thou gavest me

no kiss; but she, since she came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but she with ointment hath anointed my feet. Wherefore I say to thee: Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much. But to whom less is forgiven, he loveth less. And he said to her: Thy sins are forgiven thee. And they that sat at meat with him, began to say within themselves: Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman: Thy faith hath made thee safe, go in peace.

Why was Magdalen so publicly penitent?

Because she had been a public sinner.—It is not enough for one who has committed sins before others and given public scandal, to do penance in private, but he must strive by public good example to repair the scandal he has given.

Why did Magdalen stand behind the Saviour's feet?

She did so because of her shame for the sins with which she was stained, not venturing to appear before His face.—O that we, too, would throw ourselves in spirit in salutary fear at Christ's feet, and follow His footsteps into the right path!

Why did Magdalen not confess her sins, but only weep over them?

St. Ambrose says, she did not confess her sins with words, it is true, but with the heart and many contrite tears, for she knew well, that tears are far more powerful than words to efface sin. It was, besides, not necessary to confess to Christ, the Omniscient, and confession was not then established.

We learn from this, that simply confessing our sins in words, does not suffice, but that we must weep over them with tears of penance, or, at least, have interior sorrow and detestation of them.

Why did she wash the feet of Jesus, kiss them, dry them with her hair, and anoint them?

She thus offered that to God which she had abused, says St. Gregory. Her eyes had languished for earthly things, she now punishes them with penitential tears; her hair had been used to delight her eyes, and she uses it to wipe away the tears; her lips had spoken idle words, and with them she kisses the Saviour's feet; the ointment had been used in sinful ways, and now it serves to anoint Christ in advance of His burial. (*Matt.* xxvi. 12.)

Here we have a true model of real penance. Every thing which has served us to sin, should be offered to God by mortification, and we should especially use the means which have occasioned so many sins, for the poor, who are represented by the feet of the Lord.

Why did Christ so willingly forgive Magdalen her sins?

Because she loved much. He who truly loves, is grieved from the heart for having offended the loved one; and because we do not truly love God, it is that we so seldom at confession have real contrition for our sins. We should, therefore, daily pray for the love of God, for St. Gregory says, that the more the heart of the sinner glows with the ardent fire of love, the more the rust of sin will be consumed.

Why did Jesus say: Thy faith hath made thee safe?

Because Jesus meant by faith a faith that is active in love. A true living faith cannot be without love, as true love cannot exist without faith.

PRAYER. O Jesus! I fall with Magdalen at Thy feet, and accuse myself of having shamefully abused the favors with which Thou hast so paternally blessed me in body and soul, and have so badly spent the time of my past life, that I am not worthy to raise my eyes to heaven. But ah, to whom shall I turn, from whom shall I seek help and comfort if not from Thee, O sweetest Jesus, who only came into the world to seek out the sinners and make them happy! Give me, therefore, a zealous will to turn myself from all evil, and to turn to Thee, my Highest Good, and out of true love be sorry for my sins, beware of them in future, avoid all evil occasions, all that incites to sin, and repair by the practice of good works the time I have hitherto lost. Grant me this, O Lord Jesus, by Thy bitter passion and death, and by the intercession of St. Mary Magdalen, the penitent. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. JAMES, THE GREATER, APOSTLE.

[July 25.]

James, born in Galilee, son of Zebedee and Salome, a relation of the blessed Virgin Mary, was a fisherman, like his brother John, and one of the first of the apostles called by Christ. He left everything to follow the Lord, and with Peter and John was favored by Christ with special confidence. He was present when Christ was glorified on Mount Tabor, when He healed Peter's mother in law of the fever, raised the daughter of Jairus to life, and when He suffered the unutterable terror of death on Mount

Olivet; he was also, with the rest of the apostles, a witness of Christ's ascension, received with them the Holy Ghost on Pentecost, and then preached the gospel in Judea and in the neighborhood of Jerusalem. He and his brother John were called by Christ the Sons of Thunder, on account of their great zeal for the honor and kingdom of God. When James with this thunder-like zeal continued to preach the resurrection and the doctrine of Jesus in Judea, the Jews were so enraged against him, that King Herod thought nothing would please them more than that he should condemn the apostle to death, and this he did at Easter in the year of our Lord 44. But when the one who led him to execution, saw the firmness of his faith, he also became converted to Christ, and both were therefore led to death. On the way he prayed the apostle to forgive him, who said to him, Peace be with you! and kissed him; both were beheaded. This James was the first of the apostles to shed his blood for Jesus, and to drink of the chalice of suffering. His sacred remains were afterwards brought to Compostella in Spain. The Church celebrates his feast on the day of this translation and not on the day of his martyrdom, which, as already said, was at Easter.

The Introit of the Mass is the same as on the Feast of St. Andrew.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Sanctify, O Lord, and preserve Thy people; that being assisted by James, Thy Apostle, they may please Thee in their conduct of life, and always serve Thee with a steadfast faith. Thro'.

LESSON. (i. *Cor.* iv. 9—15.) Brethren: I think that God hath set forth us apostles, the last, as it were men appointed to death: because we are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ: we are weak, but you are strong: you are honourable, but we without honour. Even unto this hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffetted, and have no fixed abode. And we labour working with our own hands: we are reviled, and we bless: we are persecuted, and we suffer it. We are blasphemed, and we entreat: we are made as the refuse of this world, the offscouring of all even until now. I write not these things to confound you; but I admonish you as my dearest children: for if you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet not many fathers. For in Christ Jesus by the gospel I have begotten you.

EXPLANATION. Paul here teaches, how little apostolic men are regarded in this world. They are in the world as on a stage,

and are treated by the impious world with contempt, but are a most pleasing sight in the eyes of God and His angels. So it is with true Christians, also; for he who lives according to the commandments, is looked upon as a fool by the world; but those who travel in the world's ways, who devote themselves to the world's principles and customs, are held as wise and reasonable men. The true Christian has no place of rest, the unjust persecute him on all sides, but he patiently bears all for the love of God; if he is reproached and abused, he prays for those who abuse him, and blesses them.

If you seek to be a true Christian, you must not take shame to yourself, because the world despises and opposes your virtuous Christian life, calling you foolish and showing you enmity. Only recall how the same has been the part of the apostles, even of Christ Himself; how they entered heaven only through sufferings, trials, and many persecutions. Woe to you, if you seek to enter it by other paths!

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xx. 20—23.) AT THAT TIME: came to him the mother of the sons of Zebedee with her sons, adoring and asking something of him. Who said to her: What wilt thou? She saith to him: Say that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand and the other on thy left in thy kingdom. And Jesus answering and said: You know not what you ask. Can you drink the chalice that I shall drink? They say to him: We can. He saith to them: Of my chalice indeed you shall drink, but to sit on my right hand or left hand, is not mine to give you, but to them for whom it is prepared by my Father.

What did this mother ask for her sons from Christ?

That in Christ's kingdom, in heaven, her sons should rank next to the Lord Himself, and be above all the other apostles.

In the same manner those parents act who seek to make their children enter te clergy, often forcing them to it, without considering whether they have a vocation or not, or are fitted for the position. Hence it happens, that priests often make themselves and others unhappy, because they have mistaken their vocation and did not enter the fold, the Church, by the right door.

Why did Christ say: You know not what you ask?

Because the mother and her children were most unreasonable in their request, requiring a thing so great without considering, whether they were worthy of it.

This reproach is also deserved by those who, in vain pride and overweening selfesteem, seek high places without thinking

about the honor of God and what is really best for their own and their neighbor's salvation.

What is meant by the chalice which Christ mentions?

The chalice of pain and suffering which He, and later these disciples also, must drink, and of which every one must drink, who wishes to reach heaven with Christ.

Did these disciples drink it?

Yes, for James suffered a martyr's death, and John endured many trials and persecutions, until he reached a very great age.

Why did Christ say: To sit on my right hand or left hand, is not mine to give you?

By this Christ meant that He, since they were so aspiring, could not grant this desire, and that this grace is given by His Father only to the humble, for He judges not by the person but by the merits. At the same time Christ, who had come to teach all men by precept and example the beautiful virtue of humility, wished to refuse the honor of bestowing of dignities, and give it to His Father, to whom He ever sought to give glory.

PRAYER TO ST. JAMES. O brave apostle, the first to drink the chalice of suffering after the example of Christ who had shed His blood for thee, obtain, I beseech thee, the grace from Him, that I may not fear to drink of the chalice of pain and suffering, but may bear patiently all that the hand of my God offers me, so that I may be one day worthy to enjoy in thy society the joy of heaven.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. ANNE, MOTHER OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

[July 26.]

According to old traditions, the saintly mother of the blessed Virgin, whose name, Anne, signifies grace, was descended on her father's side from the tribe of Levi, and on her mother's from the tribe of Juda. She was born in Bethlehem and married, while still a pure and pious virgin, Joachim, a man of position, with whom she lived, occupied in pious works, and patiently conforming to the will of God in all things. When this pious couple had reached a very advanced age, when they would naturally scarcely expect to have children, an angel announced to them, that they were to be blest with a daughter whom they were to name Mary. And it occurred as foretold. In

the summer following the announcement, was born the holiest of God's creatures, the Queen of angels and of men, the chosen Mother of the Son of God, not so much the fruit of the body as she was the fruit of grace. Joachim and Anne brought this child Mary, at a very tender age, to Jerusalem, presenting her to the high priest as an offering to God, to be brought up in the service of the temple. How long Anne lived after this sacrifice, is not known, but she is now enthroned among the elect in heaven with her beloved child in glory.

At the Introit of the Mass the Church sings: Let us all rejoice, and celebrate this festival in honour of blessed Anne: on whose solemnity the angels rejoice, and praise the Son of God. My heart hath uttered good tidings: my works I refer to the king. (*Ps.* xliv.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who by Thy grace wast pleased to choose blessed Anne to be the mother of the Virgin Mary; mercifully grant that we, who celebrate her festival, may be helped by her prayers to thee. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Prov.* xxxi. 10.) Who shall find a valiant woman? the price of her is as of things brought from afar off, and from the uttermost coasts. The heart of her husband trusteth in her, and he shall have no need of spoils. She will render him good and not evil, all the days of her life. She hath sought wool and flax, and hath wrought by the counsel of her hands. She is like the merchant's ship, she bringeth her bread from afar. And she hath risen in the night, and given prey to her household, and victuals to her maidens. She hath considered a field, and bought it: with the fruit of her hands she hath planted a vineyard. She hath girded her loins with strength, and hath strengthened her arm. She hath tasted and seen that her traffic is good: her lamp shall not be put out in the night. She hath put out her hand to strong things, and her fingers have taken hold of the spindle. She hath opened her hand to the needy, and stretched out her hands to the poor. She shall not fear for her house in the cold of snow, for all her domestics are clothed with double garments. She hath made for herself clothing of tapestry; fine linen and purple is her covering. Her husband is honourable in the gates, where he sitteth among the senators of the land. She made fine linen and sold it, and delivered a girdle to the Chananite. Strength and beauty are

her clothing, and she shall laugh in the latter day. She hath opened her mouth to wisdom, and the law of clemency is on her tongue. She hath looked well to the paths of her house, and hath not eaten her bread idle. Her children rose up, and called her blessed: her husband, and he praised her. Many daughters hath gathered together riches: thou hast surpassed them all. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let works praise her in the gates.

INSTRUCTION. This lesson gives us the model of a noble housewife, who, to say all in a word, labors day and night for her bodily and spiritual, temporal and eternal welfare, and for the welfare of others. The Holy Ghost Himself presents us this beautiful model. Would that all women would take example from it! But there are, alas! many who seek honor only for their beauty, their dress, their idleness, who have no occupation but that of attending to their luxurious bodies, eating, drinking, and sleeping; who count their domestic cares last of all, who neglect their children and the members of their household, leaving him to fate, even vex them and tempt them to sin by their pride and wilfulness; who squander their husband's means, and bring them to poverty and distress. How far do such women stand below the housewife of whom the lesson says, that she surpasses all in riches, that is, in virtue and good works! And they shall receive no such reward as hers, and their works instead of praising them, shall call down God's judgment upon them. Woe to them, who as Christians, as mistress of the house, might have prevented so much wrong and have done so much good, and did not! Woe to them, they shall be cast into outer darkness!

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xiii. 44—52.) At that time: Jesus spake to his disciples this parable: The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in a field. Which a man having found, hid it, and for joy thereof goeth, and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again the kingdom of heaven is like to a merchant seeking good pearls. Who when he had found one pearl of great price, went his way, and sold all that he had, and bought it. Again the kingdom of heaven is like to a net cast into the sea, and gathering together of all kinds of fishes. Which, when it was filled they drew out, and sitting by the shore, they chose out the good into vessels, but the bad they cast forth. So shall it be at the end of the

world. The angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the just. And shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Have ye understood all these things? They say to him: Yes. He said unto them: Therefore every scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven, is like to a man who is a householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure new things and old.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA,

FOUNDER OF THE "SOCIETY OF JESUS."

[July 31.]

T. Ignatius was born in 1491, at the castle of Loyola, in the northern part of Spain. His parents, of noble blood, were good, pious and virtuous christians. After the early death of his mother, one of his aunts took him in her charge, and she procured for him an education in the court of Ferdinand V., in quality of page to the king; his first military exploits were performed under Antony Manriquez, Duke of Najara.

In the war against France Ignatius was made commander of the fortified town of Pampeluna, capital of Navarre, where he defended himself with heroic courage, as long as he could; he was wounded severely in the right leg by a cannonball and with him fell the town. The French admiring his valor generously dismissed him, not detaining him a prisoner; he was brought to the castle of Loyola in a litter. Here he had his leg rebroken in order to have it well arranged. Being reduced so far that his life was little hoped for, he was in a miraculous manner cured by St. Peter, who, appearing to him in the night, touched him, whereupon he was restored to perfect health. There was, however, a protuberance left under his knee and his right leg remained shorter than the left; he therefore would by all means have the physician to ameliorate this in some way; it was attempted by a machine with which his leg was stretched with great violence. The excessive pains, which he experienced, pressed no sigh from the lips of Ignatius.

Being confined to bed, though otherwise perfectly healthy, time grew tedious to him and he desired something to read in the shape of knights' romances. No such book was found in the castle, and instead of them the servant brought him the "Lives of our Saviour and of the Saints." This book pleased him exceedingly; he would read in it for a time, place it aside, but soon take it

up again, so much delight did he take in it. In consequence of this reading he was inresistably moved to imitate the Saints, and he actually resolved to do so, in order with them to please and possess God. Every night he would rise to pray for some time, although he was still suffering many pains; he very soon formed the intention of leaving the world altogether, in order to follow the example of the Saints more closely; and he executed the idea as soon as he had recovered entirely.

It was in March, 1522, that Ignatius, clad in full armour and on horseback, ascended to the celebrated Benedictine monastery of Montserrat, where a miraculous image of the Blessed Virgin was much venerated. The first to do was to make to the saintly monk, John Chanones a general confession, which was often interrupted by the abundance of his tears. He had begged for and obtained permission to remain in the church during the night. Before entering the church however he changed his bright suit of garments for a long coat of coarse cloth, a girdle and a pair of sandals, procuring also a pilgrim's staff, as he intended to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. He then spent the whole night in most ardent prayer, shedding a flood of tears before the altar of the Blessed Virgin. In the morning he received the blessed

Eucharist, and on the same day left the mount, bequeathing his gallant horse to the monastery, and leaving his arms at the altar of the Blessed Virgin, in testimony of his renouncing the secular warfare, to assume that of Christ.

Coming to Barcellona, whence he intended to set out for Jerusalem, he could not meet a ship He, therefore, at once turned his way to Manresa, where he, for the sake of Jesus, assisted the afflicted in the hospital, at the same time unpitiably mortifying himself and suffering with meekest patience all, that others did to molest or injure him. His holy life could not remain hidden from the others and he soon noticed what thoughts were entertained about him. But Ignatius sought only the honor and praise of God, so he fled hence, and selected a cave about half a mile from Manresa for his habitation. Here he passed several days and nights without any food, at the same time increasing his mortifications to such a degree, that he was found actually halfdead by some persons, who then carried him back to Manresa. He soon recovered from his bodily afflictions, but to undergo the far more excruciating ones of the soul. He was overwhelmed with bitterest sadness, and he would have despaired and committed suicide, had he not feared to offend God by so doing. At length these painful darknesses all vanished and his soul began to overflow with spiritual joy, and, truly, the fruit, he began to reap, was of incalculable value to him and the many, whom, by the will of God, he was to guide in the future. It was at Manresa, that he had the first ideo of his "Spiritual Exercises" and formed the plan of the "Society of Jesus".

Ignatius now intended earnestly to fulfil his project of visiting the holy land. Accordingly he shipped from Barcellona to Rome, thence to Venice, where a captain kindly took him aboard demanding no pay from him. He arrived at Jerusalem after much toil, which, however, was more than amply rewarded by the sweetest consolations, which he experienced at the holy places. He desired to remain at Jerusalem, but according to the advise of the Provincial of Franciscans he returned to Spain.

Thus far God had wonderfully led and instructed Ignatius, and He now urged him to accomplish his plan of instituting a Society, to the greater glory of God and the salvation of human souls. But Ignatius felt himself deficient in all profane knowledge, and he thought it not too humiliating to frequent a common college, though 35 years of age.

During his course of studies God overwhelmed him with many graces, to which Ignatius in turn corresponded with a most ardent love; he would often be heard to cry out: "O God, my Love, and the Delight of my soul, if men knew Thee, they could never offend Thee! O my God, how good art Thou to bear with such a sinner, as I am!" After two years of study at Barcellona he went to the university of Alcala, where he took up lodging in an hospital. Here he studied hard, though he felt an aversion to studies; he

soon suspended them, in order to render immediate service to the sick and poor, to instruct children in their religion, and to institute spiritual conferences, according to the inspirations which he felt. In this way he succeeded indeed in gaining many to the cause of Jesus, but, on the other hand, he caused himself a number of enemies, as his mode of life was a continued reproach to that of others; he was even driven to leave Alcala.

Ignatius now proceeded to Valencia, where he went to the Archbishop in order to render account of his life. The Archbishop received him with paternal love and encouraged his holy zeal; he advised Ignatius to go to Salamanca there to finish his studies. Nor could he here confine himself to studies alone; he undertook to instruct in holy ways such students and sinners as would stop to listen to him. He spoke publicly very frequently and in a short time there was great excitement all over the city; —but alas, the poor beggar-preacher was compelled to leave also the Salamanca.

He next came to the conclusion to finish his studies at Paris, where he again sought an hospital, that of St. James, as his home. Daily he attended lectures, and on his way to and fro he would beg alms for himself, which latter was a great loss of time to him. According to the advice of his confessor he turned to wealthy Spaniards, who kindly assisted him with money, so that he was without care and need. Thus he gained much time for studies and other good works. Meanwhile the thought of executing his holy plan matured in the mind of Ignatius; he therefore spoke of it to several young men, and his words failed not in leaving a deep impression upon them.

Among the celebrated doctors at the university of Paris, there was Francis Xavier, a young spanish nobleman; Ignatius fixed his eye specially upon him. But vain glory, on the part of Xavier, and low poverty, on the part of Ignatius, were the difficult knot not so easily to be loosed. Ignatius knew, that Xavier was destined to be a special vessel of election, and therefore he approached him and spoke to him on every occasion possible. Xavier could not resist very long; the grace of God bore him onward and it is known all the world over what a Saint he became. Besides this truly noble Xavier, Ignatius had gained six other companions, who were all on fire with the zeal of laboring in the cause of God.

Assumption day of our Blessed Lady, in 1534, was the day set apart for instituting that; for which he had so long and zealously labored. Peter Faber, or Le Fevre, Ignatius' first follower, shortly before ordained, said holy mass in a subterraneous chapel on Montmartre, at which Ignatius and his companions assisted. Before holy Communion Faber turned to them, with the holy host in his hand, then all singly pronounced their vows of perpetual chastity, voluntary poverty and to make a pilgrimage to the holy land within a year after finishing studies; should the latter turn out

impossible, they vowed to go to the holy Father, the pope, and leave themselves at his entire disposal, binding themselves also never to accept any ecclesiastical dignities or any reward for their labours, unless compelled by a superior will.

It happened that in 1537 the Venetians declared war against the Turks, and it was found impracticable to go to Jerusalem. To fulfill their vow, Ignatius and two of his companions went to the pope to offer themselves to whatever work he should judge best.

The Pope, Paul III., received them graciously; he appointed Faber to teach scholastic divinity at the Sapienza in Rome and Laynez to explain holy Scriptures, whilst Ignatius laboured to reform the manners of the people.

Meanwhile three cardinals examined the project of founding a society. At first they opposed, but they soon changed, and Paul III. approved it, under the name of "Society of Jesus", by a bull dated Sept. 27*th*, 1540. Ignatius was obliged to be the first General; he immediately set about to write constitutions and rules for the Society, in which he designed as scope, first selfsanctification, and secondly instruction and sanctification of others. To effect the latter the "Jesuits" opened their first school in 1546, in the College, which St. Francis Borgia had built at Gandia; soon more schools flourished under the direction of this Society, and no one can ever ignore the immense good, that came from them, especially in those times of the so called Reformation.

To professors and scholars St. Ignatius recommended nothing so much, as to dedicate their labours with greatest fervour, "all to the greater glory of God"; his prudence and love, shown in his whole conduct to his religious, failed not in winning all hearts for him. He showed the affection of a most tender parent to all, specially to the sick, for whom he was solicitous to procure all possible spiritual and bodily comfort.

Besides his activity at home and among his own, it is astonishing what enterprises he would undertake abroad, establishing his Order everywhere; it is wonderful to see the energy with which he bore so continued a burden: he was visibly assisted by the hand of our Lord, who knows how to accomplish even the greatest things through the weakest instruments. For such assistance from God Ignatius could not be ungrateful, but he had God always and in all things present to his mind; every object served him as a book, wherein he read the divine perfections, and by this means he kept his soul ever raised to God. He enjoyed, as it were, an undisturbed union with God, and often was he favoured with raptures, visions and revelations. It was indeed a matter of greatest importance to St. Ignatius to remain ever united to God in unruffled peace, and to this effect he broke all hindrances by an unlimited obedience to his directors and by a most profound humility, besides the pitiless mortifications, which he underwent in many other things. Even when already broken with age and in-

firmity the saint declared, that, if his Holiness demanded so, he would immediately step aboard the first ship, though it had neither sails nor rudder, to set out for any port of the globe—so much had he subjected his will to that of others! Even to inferiors he would submit with wonderful meekness, provided he could do so without prejudice to his authority. He received rebukes from any one with cheerfulness and thanks, but if anything was said to his praise, he would become confused and often wept at it. Thus had he built upon humility, the characteristic of all saints.

St. Ignatius was general of the Society for 15 years, 3 months and 9 days, but was so worn out towards the end, that he begged for an assistant. Jerome Nadal being appointed as such, St. Ignatius kept only the care of the sick, and the rest of his time he spent in continual prayer and in preparing himself for death. The day before his death he begged to obtain his Holiness' blessing for the article of death, though no one else apprehended any danger. The next morning, lifting eyes and hands to heaven and pronouncing both with tongue and heart the sweetest name of "Jesus", with a serene countenance he gave up his happy soul into the hands of his Creator on the last day of July, 1556, in the 65*th* year of his age. He was esteemed a saint, when in life and after death; numerous miracles confirmed the opinion. He was accordingly beatified by Paul V., 1609, and canonized by Gregory XV. in 1622, though the bull was only published by Urban VIII., 1623.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who, through blessed Ignatius, didst strengthen Thy Church militant with new support, for the propagation of the greater glory of Thy name, grant that, fighting with his help and imitating him on earth, we may deserve to be crowned with him in heaven. Who livest.

EPISTLE. (ii. *Tim.* ii. 8—10.; iii. 10—12.) Brethren: Be mindful that the Lord Jesus Christ is risen again from the dead, of the seed of David according to my gospel. Wherein I labour even unto bands, as an evil doer: but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation, which is in Christ Jesus, with heavenly glory. But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, patience, persecutions, afflictions: such as came upon me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra: what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord delivered me. And all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* x. 1—9.) At that time: The Lord appointed other seventy-two; and he sent them two and two before his face into every city and place whither he himself was to come. And he said to them: The harvest indeed is great, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send labourers unto his harvest. Go: behold, I send you as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes; and salute no man by the way. Into whatsoever house you enter, first say: Peace be to this house, and if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon him: but if not, it shall return to you. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they have. For the labourer is worthy of his hire. Remove not from house to house. And into what city soever you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you; and heal the sick that are therein, and say to them: the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. ALPHONSUS MARIA LIGUORI,

BISHOP OF ST. AGATHA OF THE GOTHS, IN ITALY,

FOUNDER OF THE CONGREGATION OF OUR HOLY REDEEMER.

[August 2.]

Alphonsus, a jewel to the Church during the 18*th* century, was born Sept. 27*th*, 1696, descending from the ancient and noble Neapolitan family, the Liguories. His pious parents, Joseph Liguori and Anne Catharine Cavalieri, delivered him very early to a virtuous priest, in order to secure for him a sound and pious education; and, indeed, under such guidance Alphonsus progressed rapidly both in piety and in science. He succeeded equally well in the higher branches of study, so much so, that he already merited and obtained the title of Doctor of laws even before his twentieth year of age.

Having imbibed the best of principles and having received his education at the hands of the then most celebrated lawyers, he entered upon his public career at the courts of Naples, a true lover of justice and defender of innocence. He soon enjoyed the

repute of an able and most trustworthy advocate, whence he became the refuge of many parties both of home and abroad.

Though it may not be doubted, that Liguori had felt great inclinations to the ecclesiastical state of life, already previous to entering upon his public career, yet the immediate occasion of his change of state was the fastidious acuteness of his opponent, experienced at a lawsuit between two nobles, in which he defended his cause more warmly than usually. Exclaiming: "O world, now have I learned to know thee," he at once broke with his mode of living. In his undisturbed solitude and amid tears and incessant prayer his design to leave the world and join the ecclesiastical state of life began to mature; his father also yielded to his intentions, though only after all attempts to dissuade him had been frustrated. Liguori at once joined the Congregation of Missions at Naples, and, in order to prepare himself fitly for the duties of his call, he practised a most rigorous observance of the rules prescribed, omitting no exercise of piety. Full of ardour to preach the gospel he already as deacon ascended the pulpit, around which there soon accumulated numerous hearers, not being able to resist his singular power of speech. Truly, his ardour was blessed by God with abundant fruit, which increased the more, when he as priest

began to labour in the Confessional, where he by the force of his words moved to penance even the most obdurate hearts.

Upon occasion of recruiting his health after a severe disease, the saint in company with several priests went to the town of Scala, where he had likewise laboured with singular energy in the work of saving souls; here he was advised by a pious nun, that it was the will of God, he should found a Congregation of priests, for the purpose of instructing youth and particularly of converting the peasantry to a pious life. Though the saint felt himself too weak for such an important undertaking, yet he confided the matter to his superiors, having well considered it, and only after having had recourse to most assiduous prayer. His superiors, however, viewing it as the design of God, urged him to execute this holy work. Accordingly the saint, despite the many hindrances and even persecutions, which he was obliged to surmount, actually founded a Congregation of pious priests (1723) calling it the "Congregation of Priest of the most holy Redeemer"; he chose the bishop of Castellamare to be their head.

Although these men, so zealous for the salvation of souls, had no other than poor and small houses as their homes, where they could expect only the most necessary bodily food, yet their number increased to such a degree, that the saint was obliged to found a second and a third mission.

He now thought of compiling specific rules for his Congregation, which he also with the aid of God and the counsel of pious and prudent men completed. It would be a difficulty to tell all the good this congregation accomplished as to missions, preaching, catechising and other public instructions on the one hand, and specially in the Confessional on the other hand. Hence the repute of Alphonsus' sanctity could no longer remain a hidden thing. It was soon abroad, what he and his congregation effected towards promoting God's honour among men and the salvation of souls. Hence many provinces endeavoured to secure for themselves the benefit of this blessed institution, which Pope Benedict XIV. also confirmed.

Ever intent upon preserving and perfecting the spirit of piety in his congregation, Liguori, in his truly paternal love, was equally accessible to all of his subordinates, and by this was he enabled to introduce them to all spiritual exercises, whilst he hesitated not to punish failings with due severity.

Nor was his zeal limited to a small country; of the extensive kingdom of both Sicilies there was scarcely a town, that had not enjoyed the benefit of his apostolic labours; before even finishing one mission, he was already invited to another. In order to reward the saint, Charles III., King of both Sicilies, offered him the archbishopric of Salerno, which, however, the saint most humbly declined; but soon after this, Pope Clement XIII. nominated him bishop of St. Agatha, which dignity he was at length obliged to

accept in obedience to the will of the pope, although he strove by all means to evade this honor. When bishop he observed the rules of his institution with no less zeal than before, choosing at the same time to live in poverty, as he did as simple priest.

His main object in view was to increase piety and science among the clergy of his diocese, and he introduced, as far as possible, among his clergy in general the rules of his congregation; thus the seminary of St. Agatha soon became a school of the fear of God and of christian erudition.

The saint also introduced nuns, such as were already established at Scala, called "of our Redeemer"; he encouraged them in the love to Jesus and in the veneration of the B. V. Mary; he inculcated especially the worthy use and frequentation of the holy Sacraments, and advised them in particular to avoid all superfluous conversation with worldly-minded people. He was indefatigable in leading profligate women back to a virtuous course of life; he did all in his power to preserve young women in their innocence, when they were in any danger of losing it; he was a solicitous father and a general aid to poor, disconsolate and afflicted souls;—in short, he was in every respect the example for all good deeds.

After the saint had thus for thirteen years filled his office with utmost fidelity, even though oppressed with bodily infirmity, and after having enriched the Church with so many most valuable writings, he repeatedly begged of the Holy See to be remitted his office, specially as his infirmities increased from day to day.

At length the Pope, Pius VI., though reluctantly, conceded in the year 1775. The saint recommended the care of his congregation to his Vicar-general, the Rev. P. Andreas Villaut, and at once he prepared himself for his approaching final hour. With glowing ardour he received the holy Sacraments, and, according to the wish of his confessor, he blessed each member of his congregation. During his last moments he pressed a crucifix and a picture of our Lady of dolors to his breast, and in presence of his disconsolate brethren he returned his amiable soul to the hands of its Creator, on the first day of August 1787, being in the ninetieth year of his age.—The Lord glorified him with miracles both during his life and after death.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. God, who hast enriched Thy Church with a new offspring through the blessed Alphonsus Maria, Thy Confessor and Bishop, so zealous for the salvation of souls, we beseech Thee, that, taught by his salutary admonitions and confirmed by his example, we may safely come to Thee. Thro'.

The Epistle and Gospel as on the Feast of St. Ignatius Loyola.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. DOMINIC.

[August 4.]

T. Dominic was born, in 1170, at Calaruega in Spain. His mother whilst she was with child of him, dreamed that she brought forth a whelp, that carried in its mouth a burning torch, with which it set the whole world on fire. After his birth it was her first care to procure him speedily the grace of baptism. By her early instructions he was taught to turn the first dawning of his reason towards his Creator. Such was his fervor in his childhood, that he accustomed himself to rise often in the night to pray. At fourteen years of age the saint was seat to the public schools of Palentia. Dominic here laid in a solid stock of learning, and became a great proficient in rhetoric, philosophy and theology. He grew not only in wisdom, but also in holiness. He kept his senses in constant subjection by austere mortification; even with the virtuous he made his conversation very short; boards or the floor were the only bed, on which he took his rest. From his mother's example he had learned a tender devotion to the holy Mother of God and an extraordinary affection for the poor; to assist whom in a famine he not only gave all his money and goods, but sold even his books and his own writings. As soon as Dominic had finished his studies, he preached the word of God to the people at Palentia with wonderful success. Every one looked upon the man of God as an oracle, consulted him in all doubts and acquiesced in his decisions. In 1198 St. Dominic left Palentia at the invitation of Azebedo, Bishop of Osma, and received the habit of the regular canons of St. Austin, being then twenty-eight years old. He now subjected his body to still greater austerities. Although he studied to conceal from the eyes of men as much as possible this holy severity, its effects appeared sensibly in the decay of his strength. His bishop therefore ordered him to mix a little wine with the water which he drank. The bishop of Osma, being sent on an embassy into France, took Dominic with him. In their way they passed through Languedoc, which was then filled with the abominations of the heresy of the Albigenses. Being pierced to the heart with compassion for the unhappy condition of these heretics, the bishop and Dominic went to Rome, to ask of Pope Innocent III. leave to stay in Languedoc to labor among the Albigenses. The pope readily granted this permission. They immediately returned into Languedoc. Dominic and the bishop, who were joined by some Cistercian abbots, proposed, that to laboor with success, they ought to employ persuasion rather than terror; and that they should imitate the poverty of Christ and the apostles, travelling on foot, without money or pro-

visions. St. Dominic now labored unceasingly in these missions. He never complained of any affronts or evils which he received, courageously encountered every danger wherever the good of souls called him. So ardent was his zeal for the salvation of souls, that he was consumed with a burning desire to sacrifice for them his liberty, health and life. To his incredible labors he added the austerities of penance. He often allowed himself, especially during all lent, no other nourishment than bread and water; and spend-

ing with his companion a great part of the night in prayer, he reserved only a short time for rest, which he took, lying on a board. St. Dominic saw with grief that many children of catholic parents, for want of the means of procuring a proper education, fell into the hands of those that corrupted their morals or their faith. To cut off the source of this fatal disorder, he founded the famous nunnery of Pronille. This monastery was the motherhouse of all the nuns of the Order of St. Dominic. After two years the bishop of Osma had to leave the mission, and return to his diocese. At his departure, he appointed St. Dominic as his successor in the office of superior of the mission. The saint, vested with this authority, established wholesome regulations to be observed by the zealous preachers, who laboured under him. About this time St. Dominic instituted the celebrated devotion of the Rosary, consisting of the recital of fifteen Our Fathers and a hundred and fifty Hail Marys, in honour of the fifteen principal mysteries of the life and sufferings of our Blessed Saviour, and of his holy Mother. This prayer is equally adapted to persons of the weakest understanding, and to those that are most learned, or the most advanced in the exercises of sublime contemplation. All find in it a most inexhausted fund of the highest acts of faith, hope, divine love, praise and thanksgiving, with a supplication for succor in all spiritual and corporal necessities.

St. Dominic had spent ten years in preaching in Languedoc, when in 1215 he founded his religious Order of Preaching Friars, the plan of which he had meditated some time before. He established an order of religious men, who with the strictest retirement and assiduous exercises of contemplation, should join a close application to sacred studies, and all the functions of an apostolic life, especially that of preaching.

He prescribed austere fasts, perpetual abstinence from flesh, and the most severe poverty, ordaining that his friars should receive their coarse subsistence from the alms of the faithful. The principal aim of the saint by this institution was to multiply in the Church zealous preachers, whose spirit and example might be a means more easily to spread the light of faith, and the fire of divine charity. Sixteen of his fellow missionaries came readily into his project; and Peter Cellani, one of this number, gave some houses he was possessed of in Toulouse, in which they formed themselves into a regular community, under the protection of the bishop. This was the first convent of the Order. To establish it, the founder was obliged to go to Rome. Pope Innocent III. received the saint with great demonstrations of kindness, on account of the reputation of his sanctity. Nevertheless the pope made at first some difficulty to approve this order, upon late complaints that too great a multiplication of orders would bring confusion, and that it was better to reform those that were already established. In the night following the pope dreamed, he saw the Lateran

Church in danger of falling, and that St. Dominic stept in and supported it with his shoulders. Hereupon the pope approved the new order by word of mouth, bidding the founder draw up the Constitutions and lay them before him. St. Dominic returned to Toulouse, and after a mature consultation with his sixteen colleagues made choice of the rule of the canons of St. Austin. He added certain particular constitutions.

When St. Dominic returned to Rome Pope Innocent III. had meanwhile died, and Honorius III. had been chosen in his place. The new pope confirmed St. Dominic's order by two bulls, both dated on the 26*th* of December, of 1216. He also detained the saint several months in Rome to preach in that city; this commission the saint executed with incredible applause and success. At length he returned with the consent of his Holiness to Toulouse, and spent some time in forming his religious brethren in the practice of the most perfect maxims of an interior life. He exhorted them strenuously to attend in the first place to the sanctification of their own souls. He added excellent instructions on humility, a perfect distrust in themselves, and an entire confidence in God alone. After the Feast of the Assumption of our Lady in the year 1217 he dismissed some of his religious to Spain and Portugal, and some to Paris. The extraordinary reputation of St. Dominic and his preaching friars drew many learned doctors and other eminent men into this new order, and the saint settled convents at Lyons, Montpellier, &c. St. Dominic went again to Rome in 1217, and the pope desirous, that his order should have a house in that city, gave him the Church of St. Sixtus. During this stay at Rome God honored his ministry with so many illustrious miracles, that Dominic acquired the name of Thaumaturgus. Among others, he also recalled to life two persons. In 1218 the saint undertook a journey from Rome through Languedoc into Spain, and founded a famous convent at Segovia and another at Madrid. In the next year he journeyed to Toulouse and Paris. He did not stay many weeks in this capital, but gained souls to God by his sermons and instructions, and received into his Order many persons of eminence. In 1220 the saint waited on Pope Honorius III. at Viterbo. Until then Dominic had taken no other title, but that of superior; the pope now commanded him to be styled general.

Wherever the saint travelled, he frequently preached; and always with that incredible success, which can only be the fruit of continual prayer. Though he was superior, he was distinguished in nothing from the lowest among his brethren, but by his more profound humility and more rigorous abstinence. To nourish in his heart a perfect contempt of the world, he was a sincere lover of holy poverty. He took all possible precautions to prevent riches ever becoming the portion and the bane of his order. He never began to instruct any one, without first imploring on his knees

the intercession of the Mother of God. In conversing with others it was his delight to speak only of God and heavenly things. St. Dominic never ceased to pray for the conversion of infidels and sinners. He would have all his religious applied to this great work, every one according to his capacity. To this great function he prepared his religious by long habits of virtue, especially of prayer, humility, selfdenial and obedience. He taught his missionaries the art of preaching to the heart by animating them with an ardent zeal and charity. Being once asked after preaching, in what book he had studied his sermon? "In no other," said he, "than in that of charity."

St. Dominic made frequent missionary excursions, founded many convents in Italy and sent some of his religious into Morocco, Portugal, Sweden, Norway, Ireland and England.

Long before his death St. Dominic had a forsight of it. Setting out on a journey from Bologna for Milan he said to his friends there: "You now see me in health; but before the glorious Assumption of the Virgin Mother, I shall depart hence to the Lord." He returned to Bologna in the summer, and was seized with a burning fever. Having throughout his sickness undergone severe pains with the greatest cheerfulness, he received the last Sacraments, and continued in secret prayer till he calmly expired on the 6*th* of August 1221. St. Dominic was canonized by Gregory IX. in 1234.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who hast deigned to illumine Thy Church through the merits and teachings of Thy Confessor, blessed Dominic, grant through his intercession, that she may not become destitute of temporal helps, and may always advance in spiritual increase. Thro'.

The Epistle as on the Feast of St. Ignatius Loyola, and the Gospel as on the Feast of St. Anthony.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. LAWRENCE, MARTYR.

[August 10.]

T. Lawrence, a youth endowed with rare gifts of body and soul, who had the best of fortunes to expect from the world, for the love of God and from zeal for the salvation of his soul put the world with all its honor, and riches and pleasures, beneath his feet, and dedicated himself to the priesthood, at a time when the Christians and especially the clergy, were continually persecuted. He was at a very early age, on account of his remarkable merit and know-

ledge, his fidelity and prudence, and notwithstanding his youth, appointed archdeacon by Pope Sixtus, in which office, besides his service at the altar, he had charge of the Church treasury and the money for the poor, which led to his martyrdom. By command of the Emperor Valerian, who ordered the bishops and priests to be sought after to be executed, the holy Pope Sixtus was taken prisoner, sentenced to death, and executed. Lawrence burning with desire for a martyr's death, wished to die with his spiritual father, and for this purpose followed him to the place of death, saying: "Where are you going, my father, without your son?" But the pope ordered him to return and guard the treasures of the Church. When these words were reported to the officers, Lawrence was taken and the treasure demanded of him. He asked for three days in which to consider the demand, and at the end of that time called the poor and sick to him, led them before the tyrant, and said: "These are the treasures of the Church which I promised you." The tyrant became furious and ordered the saint to be bound and burnt upon a glowing grate. The saint bore this horrible death with joy and with indifference to the fire, and after a time said to the tyrant: "I am now roasted enough on this side, let them turn me over." And the tyrant had him turned to the other side, upon which the saint remarked: "My flesh is now well roasted, eat if, if it pleases thee." Having then with his eyes raised to heaven, prayed for the conversion of Rome and for the spreading of the gospel throughout the whole country, the saint slept quietly in the Lord, on the tenth of August, 258.

The Introit reads: Praise and beauty are before him: holiness and majesty in his sanctuary. Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle: sing to the Lord all the earth. (*Ps.* xcv.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Enable us, we beseech Thee, O Almighty God, to extinguish in ourselves the noxious heat of sin, by whose grace blessed Lawrence triumphed over flames and the most exquisite torments. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (ii. *Cor.* ix. 6—10.) Brethren: He who soweth sparingly, shall also reap sparingly: and he who soweth in blessings, shall also reap of blessings. Every one as he hath determined in his heart, not with sadness, or of necessity. For God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound in you: that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.—As it is written: He hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor: his justice remaineth for ever. And he that ministereth seed to the sower, will both give you bread to eat and

will multiply your seed, and increase the growth of the fruits of your justice.

EXPLANATION. These words apply perfectly to St. Lawrence, who, instead of making himself rich with the Church treasures, or gaining great honors by giving them up to the avaricious tyrant, gave them to the poor and thus gained spiritual and eternal treasures in abundance. In this we should imitate him. Almsgiving is, as the apostle says, like a field, which the more it is sowed by giving, the richer harvest it will bring for body and soul. We should not be sad or vexed in giving, for this shows parsimony; he who gives freely to the poor, is agreeable to God, and God will repay him in His own time with corporal and spiritual riches, and will never let him come to want. That which we give to the poor, is not lost to us, but is deposited in the Lord's treasury, whence we will again receive it with great interest.

GOSPEL. (*John* xii. 24—26.) AT THAT TIME: Jesus said to his disciples: Amen, amen, I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground, die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life, shall lose it: and he that hateth his life in this world, keepeth it unto life eternal. If any man minister unto me, let him follow me: and where I am, there also shall my minister be. If any man minister to me, him will my Father honour.

What is meant by the grain of wheat which dies?

Christ, our Lord, who had to die and lay in the grave, that by His death He might bring forth the fruit of redemption, conversion, and happiness for mankind; every true Christian who mortifies his evil desires, avoids improper inclinations, and the vanity of the world, and brings forth the fruit of virtue and good works. Such mortifications are a kind of martyrdom, and like martyrdom will be most gloriously rewarded by God. "Crucify thy flesh," says St. Chrysostom, "that thou mayst obtain the martyr's crown." "It is," says St. Bernard, "a species of torture, by which the spirit kills the works of the flesh." "To patiently endure disgrace, injustice, and persecution, to love those who hate us, is an inward martyrdom," says St. Gregory. "The whole life of a Christian," writes St. Augustine, "if led by the gospel, is a continual cross and martyrdom."

What does it mean to hate one's life?

It means, to promise to our inclinations nothing which is against God's commandments, and dangerous to our salvation, and this means at the same time, to truly love our soul and to

preserve it for eternal life; on the contrary, to yield everything to our soul's passions and inclinations, everything for which it improperly longs, means to destroy it. We hate the sick man, if we give him that which he desires, when it is injurious to him, and love him, if we refuse it to him. In the same way he truly loves his soul, who resists its evil desires, and he hates it, who yields to them. To such a hatred or rather to such a true love for our souls, we are admonished by the Holy Ghost: Go not after thy lusts, but turn away from thy own will. If thou give to thy soul her desires, she will make thee a joy to thy enemies. (*Eccl.* xviii. 30, 21.)

PETITION. O Jesus, blessed Fruit of the Virgin Mary, we thank Thee, that Thou wert pleased for our salvation to become, through Thy incarnation, such a wonderful grain of wheat and die such a bitter death. Ah! that we rightly knew this grace, and imitated Thee in our lives, as have so many thousands of martyrs, among whom shines especially Thy servant Lawrence. Grant us, that we may also be filled with the desire to bear all sufferings patiently unto the end, and so zealously serve Thee here, that we may in the other world, as Thou hast promised, be honored by Thy Heavenly Father, and be happy for all eternity. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

[August 15.]

Why is this feast thus named?

Because on this day the blessed Virgin was taken up to heaven.

Why are herbs and fruits blessed on this day?

The Church does this to manifest her joy at the glorious victory which Mary achieved over death, the world, and the devil, and at her splendid triumph when she, adorned with virtues as with so many flowers, entered heaven; and that God may so sanctify and bless the herbs and fruits, that their use may serve to our welfare.

At the Introit of Mass, the Church invites to universal joy by singing: Let us all rejoice in the Lord, whilst we celebrate this festival in honour of the B. V. M. for whose Assumption the angels rejoice, and praise the Son of

God. My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the king. Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Forgive, O Lord, we beseech Thee, the sins of Thy people: that we, who are not able to do any thing of ourselves that can be pleasing to Thee, may be assisted in the way of salvation by the prayers of the Mother of Thy Son. Thro'. the same.

LESSON. (*Eccl.* xxiv. 11—20.) I sought rest every where, and I shall abide in the inheritance of the Lord. Then the Creator of all things gave his orders, and said to me: and he that made me, rested in my tabernacle, and he said to me:

Let thy dwelling be in Jacob, and thy inheritance in Israel, and take root in my elect. From the beginning, and before the world was I created, and unto the world to come I shall not cease to be, and in the holy dwelling place I have ministered before him. And I was so established in Sion, and in the holy city likewise I rested, and my power was in Jerusalem. And I took root in an honourable people, and in the portion of my God his inheritance, and my abode is in the full assembly of saints. I was exalted like a cedar in Libanus, and as a cypress-tree on Mount Sion. I was exalted like a palm-tree in Cades, and as a rose-plant in Jericho: as a fair olive-tree in the plains, and as a plane-tree by the water in the streets, was I exalted. I gave a sweet smell like cinnamon, and aromatical balm: like the myrrh I yielded a sweet odour.

EXPLANATION. The Holy Ghost uses these words, it is true, in praise of eternal wisdom, but the Church applies them to Mary also, to describe the glory and splendor of her assumption. For Mary found her rest only in God, the Creator of all things, who created her, and preserved her from original sin, and lived in her womb as in a tabernacle. On this day God seems to say to her: "Possess the abode destined for thee from all eternity, and the inheritance designed for thee as the first of the elect." Thus Mary is exalted as Queen of the saints and angels in the heavenly Sion; and now in this holy city, she enjoys an undisturbed peace with God, shares his happiness with Him, and is second only to Him in power and glory; there she shines in the most radiant garments, like an ever blooming rose-plant in Jericho, from there she lets flow upon the wretched children of Adam the oil of her mercy as from a fair olive-tree, shades them with her protection like a plane-tree, and refreshes them with the sweet fragrance of her virtue and grace.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* x. 38—42.) At that time: Jesus entered into a certain town; and a certain woman named Martha, received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary. Who sitting also at the Lord's feet, heard his word. But Martha was busy about much serving. Who stood and said: Lord, hast thou no care that my sister hath left me alone to serve? Speak to her therefore, that she help me. And the Lord answering, said to her: Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and art troubled about many things. But one

thing is necessary. Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken from her.

Why does the Church read this gospel to-day?

Because it can be well applied to Mary, who more worthily and tenderly even than Martha received, nourished, and served the Son of God, and more fervently and attentively than even Martha's sister listened to His words, preserved them in her heart and sought to fulfil them. And in both ways has she chosen the best of all parts, because in both she walked in perfection and so gained the greatest of rewards, this day bestowed upon her, never to be taken from her.

What may we learn from these two sisters?

That like Mary, who is a type of the active, stirring life, we should be energetic in performing the duties of our state of life, but not on that account to forget to practise good works, to do all for the love of God, seeking in all things His pleasure, and, since we can no longer serve Christ in a material way, to serve the poor, of whom He says, that whatever we do to the least of them, He will consider and reward as if done to Himself. We are also like Mary who represents the contemplative life, to be fervent in prayer, in listening and meditating upon the word of God, upon the divine Majesty, its perfections, and our frailty, thus to sanctify ourselves and to make ourselves more worthy of eternal happiness. This contemplative life Christ calls the better part, but does not therefore set aside the active life. We can easily unite both, but must never lose sight of the better part.

Why does Jesus reproach Martha?

Because she was uneasy and distracted by her own carefulness and anxiety, and forgot to hear the divine word.—Thus do many Christians who find no time to work at the salvation of their soul, and even during divine service and the sermon are thinking of their domestic affairs, and so leave the Church without having gained anything for their soul.

What is the one thing necessary?

To seek the glory of God and the salvation of our soul. He who attends to this, attends to all his duties, he is busy and active, but not uneasy and disturbed, and calmly directs his mind to God in all his labors, offers his every step to Him, and draws His grace upon himself.

PETITION. Would that I had better attended to the one thing necessary! Unhappy hours which I have squandered for the world, its vanities and pleasures! Where are you now? What shall I have from you in eternity but sorrow and

desolation? Could I but call back my wasted life? But since that cannot be, give me Thy grace, I beseech Thee, O most beneficent God, to pass the remaining years of my life wholly in Thy service, and work above all and only for the affairs of my soul.

THOUGHTS OF ST. BERNARD OF THE ASSUMPTION OF MARY.

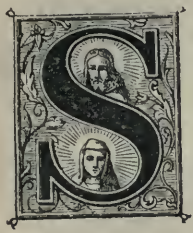
ON this day the glorified Virgin entered heaven, and crowned by her presence the holy pleasures of its inhabitants. But what mind can conceive the glory with which the arrival of the Queen of the world was celebrated by the brilliant heavenly hosts, their advance to greet her, their chanting as they led her to the magnificent throne? Who can fancy the tender gaze, the loving countenance, the divine caresses with which she was received by her Son and placed over all created beings, honored as became such a mother, with the glory that became such a Son? What lips may describe the assumption of Mary? As upon earth she before all others received special grace, so in heaven she before all others receives special glory. If eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to know the delights that God has prepared for those that love Him, who shall say what is prepared for her who bore Him and loved Him more than all! O blessed art thou, Mary! Most blessed wert thou, when thou didst receive the Saviour; most blessed art thou, when the Saviour receives thee!

ST. BERNARD'S PRAYER TO MARY.

We accompany thee, on this day, with our most ardent wishes to thy Son, O glorious Virgin, Queen of heaven! and follow thee from afar, O happy Virgin! Give thy mildness to the world, give of the grace thou hast found with God. Obtain by thy blessed intercession, grace for the guilty, recovery for the sick, strength for the fainthearted, aid for those in peril! And for us, thy servants, who on this glorious festival-day invoke thy sweetest name, spend, O gentlest Queen, His grace for us Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord and God, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. BERNARD, ABBOT.

[August 20.]



T. Bernard, the third son of Tescelin and Alice, both of the highest nobility in Burgundy, was born in 1091 at Fontaines, a castle near Dijon. His parents were persons of great piety, and His mother not content to offer him to God as soon as he was born, afterwards consecrated him to his service in the church. Bernard was sent, when still young, to Chatillon on the Seine, to pursue a complete course of studies. Even then he loved to be alone; he was always recollected, obedient, obliging to all, and modest beyond what can be expressed. He made it his continual earnest prayer to God, that He would never suffer him to sully his innocence by sin. The quickness of his parts astonished his masters. Bernard at a very early age entered upon the studies of theology and of the holy scriptures. He was nineteen years old, when his pious mother died. At this time Bernard became his own master; for his father was employed at a distance. He made his appearance in the wor d with all the advantages and talents, which can make it amiable to a young nobleman, or which could make him loved by it. His vivacity of wit and cultivated genius, his prudence and natural modesty, his affability and sweetness of temper, made him beloved by all. But these very advantages had their snares. His first danger was from false friends; but the light of grace made him discover the first attempts and resolutely repulse them. Once he happened to fix his eyes on the face of a woman, but immediately reflecting that this was a temptation, he ran to a pond and leaped up to the neck into the water, which was then as cold as ice. Bernard was affrighted at the dangers of the world, and began to think of forsaking it, and retiring to Citeaux, where God was served with great fervor. His brothers and friends endeavored to dissuade him from it; but he so pleaded his cause, as to draw them all over to join him in his courageous undertaking. Thus it came, that in the year 1113 Bernard arrived at Citeaux, accompanied by thirty noblemen. This holy company prostrating themselves before St. Stephen, the founder of Citeaux, begged to be admitted to join the monks in their penitential lives. St. Stephen seeing their fervor, received them with open arms, and gave them the habit. St. Bernard was then twenty three years old. He entered this house in the desire to die to the remembrance of men, to live hidden, that he might be occupied only with God. To renew his fervor against sloth, he repeated often to himself: "Bernard, Bernard, why camest thou hither?" He studied to mortify his senses and to die to himself in all things. After a

ST. BERNARD.

year's noviciate, he did not know whether the top of his cell was covered with a ceiling, nor whether the church had more than one window. In 1114 he made with his companions his profession in the hands of St. Stephen. He set out with extraordinary ardor in all his monastic exercises. At his work in the fields or in the forest his soul was continually occupied with God, and he used afterwards to say, that he never had any other master in his studies of the holy scriptures but the oaks and beeches of the forest. He

almost always labored under some bodily infirmity, but he suffered all his distempers without ever speaking of them. He was a great lover of poverty in his habit, cell, and all other things: but called dirtiness a mark of sloth or affectation. His chief sustenance was coarse bread softened in warm water.

The number of monks being grown too great at Citeaux, St. Stephen founded other monasteries, and in 1115 selected St. Bernard as abbot of twelve monks to found a new house in the diocese of Langres in Champagne. They walked in procession singing psalms, with their new abbot at their head, and settled in a desert called the Valley of Wormwood, encompassed by a wild forest. This young colony had often much to suffer, and being several times in extreme necessity, was as often relieved in some sudden unexpected manner. The reputation of this house in a short time became so great, that the number of monks in it amounted to one hundred and thirty, and the country gave this valley the name of Clara-vallis or Clairvaux.

St. Bernard now seemed to set no bounds to the austerities which he practised himself. This severity brought upon him a severe distemper, and his life was almost despaired of about the end of the year 1116. He was therefore obliged by the general chapter of the order to submit to the authority of William of Champeaux, who commanded, that Bernard should lodge outside of the enclosure, that he should not observe the rule of the monastery as to eating and drinking, and that he should be entirely discharged from all care of the affairs of his community. After a year St. Bernard returned in good health to his monastery, and to the practice of his former austerities. He founded many monasteries, and by his sanctity and learning in the wisdom of the Holy Ghost drew great numbers of the most eminent men into his order. So great was the reputation of his learning and piety, that all princes desired to have their differences settled by him; bishops regarded his decisions as oracles, and referred to him the most important affairs of their churches; the popes looked upon his advice as the greatest support of the holy see.

After the death of Honorius II. in 1130, Innocent II. was chosen pope by the greater number of cardinals. But at the same time a faction attempted to invest with that supreme dignity cardinal Peter, who took the name of Anacletus, and was so powerful, that he got all the strongholds about Rome into his hands. Upon this occasion it was St. Bernard, whom God used as an instrument to restore peace to his church. In a council of French bishops he strenuously maintained the justice of Innocent's cause; he persuaded Henry I., King of England, to acknowledge Innocent, and convinced the Emperor Lothaire of the validity of the election; in a public conference at Salerno in Southern Italy, Bernard convicted Anaclet's partisans of schism, and brought over many persons of distinction to the union of the church.

The saint exerted the same zeal in maintaining the purity of the catholic faith, which he employed in the support of its unity. He caused the writings of Peter Abelard and of Gilbert de la Porree to be condemned, and by his learning and mildness succeeded, that both retracted their errors.

In 1145 Bernard of Pisa, Abbot of the Cistercian monastery of the Three Fountains in the neighborhood of Rome, was chosen pope and took the name of Eugene III. He had been a monk at Clairvaux under St. Bernard. St. Bernard was struck with surprise at the news, and fearing lest so great an exaltation should make him forget himself, he wrote to him five books, of consideration, pressing upon him without flattery the various duties of his station, and strongly recommending to him always to reserve time for selfexamination and daily meditation.

About this time the newly founded Christian kingdom of Jerusalem was in the greatest danger. Pope Eugene III., coming into France in 1147 held there several councils to promote a second crusade and commissioned St. Bernard to preach the Holy War. This the abbot executed with incredible success in all the chief provinces of France, and afterwards did the same in the principal cities of Germany. King Lewis VII. of France, and the Emperor Konrad took part in this crusade, but it ended disastrously. The ill success must partly be attributed to the treachery of the Greeks; but the finger of God was visible in chastising the sins of the Christians; for a great part of those who composed the crusading army were led by no other motive than the prospect of plunder, and committed every kind of disorder in their march. This unfortunate expedition raised a great storm against St. Bernard, because he had seemed to promise success. His answer was, that he confided in the divine mercy for a blessing on an enterprise undertaken for the honor of His divine name; but that the sins of the army were the cause of their misfortunes.

In the beginning of the year 1153, St. Bernard fell into a decay. He had long dwelt in heaven in desire, sighing continually under the weight of his banishment from God; though his desire by humility he ascribed to pusillanimity, not to charity. After six months of suffering, he with inflamed sighs of compunction and holy love prepared himself for his last moment, in which he happily yielded up his soul to God on the 20*th* of August, 1153. His name was solemnly enrolled among the saints by Alexander III. in 1165.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who hast given to Thy people blessed Bernard as a minister of eternal salvation, grant, we beseech Thee, that we may merit to have him as an intercessor in heaven, whom we have had as a teacher on earth. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Eccl.* xxxix. 6—14.) He will give his heart to resort early to the Lord, that made him, and he will pray in the sight of the Most High. He will open his mouth in prayer, and will make supplications for his sins. For if it shall please the great Lord, he will fill him with the spirit of understanding: And he will pour forth the words of his wisdom as showers, and in his prayer he will confess to the Lord. And he shall direct his counsel, and his knowledge, and in his secrets shall he meditate. He shall shew forth the discipline he hath learned, and shall glory in the law of the covenant of the Lord. Many shall praise his wisdom, and it shall never be forgotten. The memory of him shall not depart away, and his name shall be in request from generation to generation. Nations shall declare his wisdom, and the church shall shew forth his praise.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* v. 13—19.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt lose its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is good for nothing any more but to be cast out, and to be trodden on by men. You are the light of the world. A city seated on a mountain, cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, that it may shine to all that are in the house. So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Do not think that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For amen I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle shall not pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. He therefore that shall break one of these least commandments, and shall so teach men, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. But he that shall do and teach, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW, APOSTLE.

[August 24.]

Artholomew, a native of Cana in Galilee, is probably that Nathaniel whom Philip, when called by Christ, took with him to the Lord. When called by Christ to be an apostle, Bartholomew left all at once, followed Him, and witnessed His sufferings and death, His resurrection and ascension. When he had received the Holy Ghost, he preached the gospel first to the Jews, and gaining but little fruit from their stubbornness, turned to the heathens in India, where he carried a copy of the gospel of St. Matthew; from India St. Bartholomew went to Phrygia and Lycaonia, everywhere preaching the faith of the cross, coming finally to Great Armenia, where after gaining a rich harvest for the faith, he received the crown of martyrdom. In Great Armenia he smote with dumbness the devil who had been prophetizing in a temple of the idols, freed the king's daughter of an evil spirit, and converted the king and many of his court to the Christian religion. Enraged at this, the priests of the idols swore an oath to put him to death, and at their instigation the saint was killed after frightful tortures by Astyages, a brother of the converted king and a zealous idolator. The general belief is, that he was crucified with his head downwards, and while still alive the skin stripped from his body. His sacred relics were brought to Benevent, Italy, in the year 809, and to Rome in 983, where they are venerated in a Church dedicated to him.

[The Introit as on the Feast of St. Andrew.]

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O Almighty and eternal God, who comfortest Thy people by the sacred and venerable solemnity of Thy blessed apostle Bartholomew: grant, we beseech Thee, that we may love what he believed, and practise what he taught. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (i. *Cor.* xii. 27—31.) Brethren: You are the body of Christ, and members of a member. And God indeed hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly doctors, after that miracles, then the graces of healings, helps, governments, kinds of tongues, interpretations of speeches. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all doctors? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the grace of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But be ye zealous for the better gifts.

EXPLANATION. The apostle here gives a beautiful picture of the holy Church. He teaches, that all faithful Catholics compose the body of Christ, the universal Church; every true Catholic is, indeed, a member of a single Church (diocese, congregation), and this a member of the universal Church. No one is the whole body, each one is only a member, some members higher than others, superiors of the Church, bishops, priests, and preachers, but no one should raise himself above the others; for as in a body all the members are necessary, so all the members of the body of Christ, the Church, are necessary, though they stand on the lowest step. But those members of the Church who do not possess the gifts which the apostle describes, and whom God has not called to special office in His Church, should not seek places and positions which are not in their vocation, but as every member keeps the place on the body which is given it, so should every member of the body of Christ, the Church, keep the place which God has appointed to him, and work according to his ability for the welfare of the whole Church. Has God placed you in a farmer's place? then envy not the nobles and the officers; is another more skilful than you and fills a higher position? then murmur not: for as all the members of a body cannot be eyes, so in the moral body of the Church all cannot be in a high office or position, but all the members of Christ's body, all the faithful of the Church, can be zealous for the more special gifts, for greater sanctity and perfection, each in his own position, and for a perfect love of God; for upon this path the king and the beggar may journey together to eternal life.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* vi. 12—19.) At that time: Jesus went out into a mountain to pray, and he passed the whole night in the prayer of God. And when day was come, he called unto him his disciples: and he chose twelve of them (whom also he named Apostles): Simon whom he surnamed Peter, and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alpheus, and Simon who is called Zelotes, and Jude the brother of James and Judas Iscariot who was the traitor. And coming down with them, he stood in a plain place, and the company of his disciples, and a very great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon, who were come to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases. And they that were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all the multitude sought to touch him, for virtue went out from him, and healed all.

Why did Jesus go out into a mountain to pray?

Because, as St. Bonaventura says, as a mountain is high, so also must our prayer raise us to God, and from the low valleys of the temporal life, we must elevate ourselves in all our thoughts and desires to God, if our prayer is to avail us.

Why did Christ pray in the night?

To teach us that night is the best time for prayer, because every thing is then quiet and we can better collect our thoughts; also that we may preserve ourselves by prayer from the snares and temptations which the devil spreads for us at night; that we should pray at night for the graces which during the day we have found necessary for ourselves and our neighbor. St. Gregory says, that on this account Christ was accustomed to pray during the night, and during the day to work by teaching and by miracles for the salvation of souls. For these reasons, prayers are said in monasteries in the night, as advised by David (*Ps.* cliii. 2.), and it is a commendable custom for families to say the rosary, a litany, and the night prayer in common.

Why did Christ pray during this particular night?

Because He was to choose His twelve apostles in the morning, and He, therefore, prayed to His Heavenly Father to give them all the graces required by the mighty mission. In the same spirit the Church prays four times during the year, on the Ember days, for those who are dedicated to the priesthood and to receive holy orders, as Christ prayed and as the apostles fasted and prayed before consecrating Paul and Barnabas. (*Acts* xiii. 3.) Besides this, the Church has appointed the fast at Ember time, and requires the faithful to ask with prayer and fasting for pious priests, for on the priesthood depends the temporal and eternal welfare or grief of the faithful. Let us pray fervently and often, that God may give us zealous and exemplary priests.

Why did Christ on this day call those twelve apostles, who before were only disciples?

Because the apostolic dignity is the highest after Christ's, and He desired, that they should first, as disciples, prepare themselves for it. He who wishes to teach, must first learn. No one should enter into an office for which he is not fitted.

What beautiful example is given us in our Saviour's coming down from the mountain, and in the conduct of the people awaiting Him?

The Saviour's descending shows us His goodness and kindness to the poor and lowly, and to the sick. He especially teaches the great ones of the earth, how they should kindly descend to their subjects, the weak and poor, hear their complaints, and relieve them. The conduct of the people who had come to hear Christ and sought to touch Him, because virtue went out from Him, curing

them, teaches us first to seek the salvation of our soul, the voice of Jesus, and then in our physical needs to seek help from Him, sure to find it.

PETITION. O blessed Apostle Bartholomew! who left all to follow Christ, even giving thy life for Him, pray for us, that we also may give up all for Christ that interferes with our love for Him, that we may imitate Him, and be eternally happy. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. AUGUSTINE, BISHOP.

[August 28.]

T. Augustine was born in the year 354, at Tagaste, a small town of Numidia in Africa. His parents were of good condition, yet not very rich; his father was an idolator, but by the holy example and prudent conduct of St. Monica, his wife, he at length learned the humility and meekness of the Christian religion, and was baptized a little before his death. Augustine went to school first in his own town; then his father, who perceived Augustine's excellent genius and wonderful disposition for learning, sent him to Madoura, a neighboring city, where he studied grammar, rhetoric and poetry. When he was sixteen years old, his father made him return to Tagaste and kept him a whole year at home. During this time the young man slighting the advice of his mother, fell into lewd company, being induced to it by idleness. Towards the end of the year 370 Augustine was sent to Carthage. There he easily held the foremost place in the school of rhetoric, and applied himself to his studies with so much eagerness and pleasure, that it was with great difficulty, that he was drawn from them. But his motives were only vanity and ambition. When he once desired to read the holy scriptures, he was offended with the simplicity of the style, and swelling with pride, as if he was endued with a great genius, he could not relish their humility, or penetrate their spirit. About his nineteenth year he fell into the sect of the Manichees, in which he continued between eight and nine years. In his twentieth year, to ease his mother of the charge of his education, his father having already died, St. Augustine left Carthage, and set up a school of grammar and rhetoric at Tagaste. Here St. Monica employed all efforts, admonitions, entreaties, severity to convert her son, but all were vain. By the loss of an intimate friend, who had been for several years the companion of his studies, Augustine was afflicted so grievously, that all places

and things where he had previously enjoyed him, were turned into bitter torment. Not being able any longer to bear his native country, he removed to Carthage, where time and new connections wore of his grief. At Carthage he opened a school of rhetoric, and gained great applause in the public disputations. Here St. Augustine met the Manichean bishop Faustus, from whom he expected the solution of many doubts. But he found, that Faustus was a good speaker, but said no more than the rest of the Manichees, only explained himself with greater grace and facility. He now disapproved entirely of the Manichean sect, but his prepossessions against the catholic faith hindered him from turning his enquiries on that side.

Being disgusted by the disorderly behaviour of the students at Carthage, he resolved to go to Rome. At Rome he lodged with a Manichean, merely on account of former acquaintance, and because he was not yet resolved to become a member of any other religion. His school was soon frequented by the greatest wits of that age, and none ever went from it, without being struck with admiration at his learning and parts. But finding the scholars there often unjust enough, not to pay their salaries to their masters, he grew weary of the place. It happened about this time, that deputies were sent from Milan to Symmachus, the prefect of Rome, requiring that he should sent thither some able master of rhetoric. Augustine having given proofs of his capacity, was selected by Symmachus and accordingly sent. At Milan he became acquainted with the holy bishop St. Ambrose. Augustine frequently attended his sermons. Although Augustine aimed only at gratifying his ears, and despised the matter, which the bishop treated, yet the sermons like a distilling rain insensibly made impressions on his heart, and caused the seeds of virtue to spring forth therein. In the search of truth he was still perplexed about the origin of evil, and suffered a secret anguish in his soul, to which only God was witness. It happened in the mean time, that one Potitianus, an African, who had an honorable employment in the emperor's court, and was a very religious man, came one day to pay a visit to Augustine and his friend Alipius: and finding a book of St. Paul's epistles lying on the table, took occasion to speak to them of the life of St. Anthony, and was surprised to find that his name had been to that hour unknown to them. Potitianus also related the example of two friends of his, who by reading the life of St. Anthony, became so inflamed with the love of God, as immediately to embrace the same kind of life. The discourse of Potitianus had a powerful influence on the mind of St. Augustine. When Potitianus had departed, he withdrew from his friend Alipius, threw himself down under a fig-tree, and there gave free vent to a torrent of tears. Whilst thus weeping with most bitter contrition of heart for his past life, he on a sudden heard as it were the voice of a child singing the words: "Tolle, lege, Tolle,

lege," that is, take up and read, take up and read. He interpreted the voice to be nothing less than a divine admonition, remembering that St. Anthony was converted from the world to a life of retirement, by hearing an oracle of the gospel read. He immediately rose up, suppressed his tears, and returned to look for the book of St. Paul's epistle's. He opened it, and read in silence the following words on which he first cast his eyes: "Not in revelling and drunkenness: not in impurities, strifes and envy: but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provisions for the flesh in its concupiscences. (*Rom.* xiii. 18.) He would read no farther, all his former hesitation was dispelled, all his doubts solved. He told Alipius what had passed in his soul; they immediately went in, and told the good news to St. Monica, who had followed her son into Italy, and came to him at Milan.

The conversion of St. Augustine happened in the year 386, the thirty second of his age. At the same time he determined to quit his school and profession of teaching rhetoric. He retired to a country-house in the neighborhood of Milan, where he wholly employed himself in prayer and study. Here he strenuously labored, by the practice of austere penance, by the strictest watchfulness over his heart and senses, and by most fervent and humble prayer to purify his affections, to disengage them perfectly from the inordinate love of creatures, and preparing himself for the grace of leading a new life in Christ, and becoming in him a new creature. In the beginning of the lent of 387 Augustine returned to Milan to prepare himself for baptism, which he received from St. Ambrose on Easter-eve of the same year. Soon after, desiring to devote himself entirely to the divine service in a life of solitude, he resolved to return into Africa. On his way thither, he lost his holy mother, St. Monica, who died in the seaport of Ostia. He landed at Carthage about September 388, made only a very short stay, making all possible haste to retire to his house in the country, with certain devout friends. There he lived almost three years entirely disengaged from all temporal concerns, serving God in fasting, prayer, good works, meditating upon His law, day and night, and instructing others by his discourses and books. In the house all things were common, and were distributed according to every one's necessities, no one among them having the least thing at his own disposal. The religious order of the hermits of St. Augustine dates its foundation from this epoch in 388. When St. Augustine was ordained priest and removed to Hippo, many of his religious brethren followed thither, and with the assistance of his bishop Valerius, he founded there a new monastery. Valerius, who was a Greek and had moreover an impediment in speaking, appointed Augustine to preach to the people in his own presence. Augustine preached constantly, sometimes every day, and sometimes twice on the same day. He did not desist even when he

was so weak as to be scarce able to speak; but he seemed to gather strength in preaching and his ardor for the salvation of souls made him forget the pains of sickness. Valerius finding himself sinking under the weight of his years and infirmities, had Augustine chosen as his coadjutor. Although the saint protested, he was at length compelled to acquiesce in the will of heaven and was consecrated in the year 395. Valerius died the following year.

In this new dignity the saint was obliged to live in the episcopal house; but he engaged all the priests, deacons and subdeacons that lived with him, to renounce all property, and to engage themselves to embrace the rule, which he established there. The saint's clothes and furniture were modest. He exercised hospitality, but his table was frugal. At table he loved rather reading or literary conferences than secular conversation, and to warn his guests to shun detraction, he had the following distich written upon his table:

> This board allows no vile detractor place,
> Whose tongue will charge the absent with disgrace.

He employed whatever could be spared of the revenues of his church in relieving the poor; he even sometimes melted down part of the sacred vessels to redeem captives. He prevailed upon his flock to establish the custom of clothing all the poor of each parish once a year.

Augustine always trembled at the danger of secret complacency, or vain glory amidst the praise of others. Sincere humility made him love, at every turn, to confess his ignorance. Nothing gave him greater confusion and mortification than the esteem of others, or their opinion of his learning. From this sincere humility the saint wrote his Confessions, a book in which he divulges all the sins of his youth, and in which he shows the ways, by which the divine mercy led him to repentance and conversion.

Augustine was indefatigable in refuting the heretics, who were at his time very numerous in the northern part of Africa. Indeed at Hippo, the Donatists were before the arrival of the saint so numerous that the Catholics formed but a small minority. By the learning and indefatigable zeal of Augustine, supported by the sanctity of his life, the catholics began to gain ground exceedingly. At this the Donatists were so much exasperated, that some of them proposed to kill him, and made even several attempts at performing their desire, all of which, however, were foiled. He wrote many works both against these heretics, as also against the Manichees, the Pelagians, the Jews and the pagans.

About the year 428 northern Africa was visited by a terrible scourge. The Vandals under Genseric with an army of 80,000 men sailed from Spain to Africa. Possidius, Bishop of Calama, an eye witness, describes the dreadful ravages by which the Vandals filled with horror and desolation all those rich provin-

ces. He saw the cities in ruin, the houses in the country razed to the ground, the inhabitants either being slain or having fled. Within a short time there were only three cities remaining, that were not in ruins: Carthage, Hippo and Cirta. About the end of May in the year 430 the Vandals appeared before Hippo. The siege continued fourteen months. Augustine did all in his power to alleviate the miseries of the besieged, he consoled the dying, tended the wounded and fed the poor. He spoke much to his people on resignation to the divine will under all the scourges which their sins deserved, and the necessity of averting the divine anger by sincere penance. In the third month of the siege the saint was seized with a fever and from the first moments of his illness doubted not, but that it was a summons of God who called him to Himself. He ordered the penitential psalms of David to be written out, and hung in tablets upon the wall by his bed; and as he there lay sick, he read them with abundance of tears. Not to be interrupted in these devotions, he desired about ten days before his death, that no one should come to him, except at those times when either the physicians came to visit him, or his food was brought to him. This was constantly observed, and all the rest of his time was spent in prayer. Though the strength of his body daily and hourly declined, yet his senses and intellectual faculties continued sound to the last. He calmly resigned his spirits into the hands of God, on the 28*th* of August, 430. The body of the saint was brought to Sardinia, and thence to Pavia, where they now rest in the church named after him, St. Augustine.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Attend to our supplications, O Almighty God, and by the intercession of blessed Augustine, Thy confessor and bishop, graciously grant the effect of Thy wonted mercy to those, to whom Thou grantest confidence to hope for forgiveness. Through our Lord.

EPISTLE. (ii. *Tim.* iv. 1—8.) Dearly beloved: I charge thee before God and Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead, by his coming, and his kingdom: Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine. For there shall be a time, when they will not endure sound doctrine: but according to their own desires they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned unto fables. Be thou vigilant, labor in all things, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry. Be sober. For I am even now ready to be sacrificed: and the time of my dissolution is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course,

I have kept the faith. As to the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord the just judge will render to me in that day: and not only to me, but to them also that love his coming.

The Gospel as on the Feast of St. Bernard.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. ROSE OF LIMA.

[August 30.]

T. Rose was born in 1586 at Lima, the capital of Peru, of poor but noble Spaniards. Her baptismal name was Isabella, which, however, was changed into Rose, at the incident of her mother one day perceiving a beautiful rose suspended over the face of the sleeping babe. The little girl was of a most attractive exterior, and of quiet disposition and so amiable in her ways, that she was of universal joy to all the house.

In her tenderest age she already manifested signs of her patience and endurance in sufferings. Once the cover of a chest fell upon and crushed her right thumb, but she kept it quiet and concealed, until the finger had festered so badly, that the surgeon was obliged to amputate it; upon an other occasion, when a most painful cure was undertaken on her, she uttered no sound, though she trembled for very pain. It was the spirit of religion and selfdenial that enabled her to act thus. Her elder brother once happened to soil her hair, whilst playing with her; this vexed her a little, but her brother pithily retorted: "Those long hair and braids of ye girls are only so many snares, with which the devil tries to entangle and bind young men." Such words touched her to the quick; apprehending danger on all sides, she fled to God, her only refuge, entreating Him to assist her with His grace; she offered her entire self to Him, vowing chastity for life, in testimony of which she cut off her beautiful hair. Jesus, now her only love, wonderfully led her to a higher spiritual life, her parents on the other hand urging her to partake of the vanities of the world. Her mother, proud of the beauty of Rose, always pressed her to dress and brush up as gayly as possible, poor as she was; she would have her decorate her head with flowers and ribands, to use powders, to wear corals and beads about her neck and arms. Rose patiently suffered these vain commands and obeyed with bitter grief, but with the flowers she would press thorns upon her head; in one instance she fastened a wreath of flowers with a pin to her very scalp in order to suffer more under the appearance of vain decoration.

St. Rose of Lima.

In all this things she was a most loving and selfsacrificing child; she labored with unwearied diligence, doing all in her power to assist her parents, who had sunk deeply into poverty.

Rose as she was by name, and to some extent in fact, she also grew up amid many thorns. When she had arrived at the age suitable for marriage, she was to be espoused to the son of a rich widow; all negotiations had already been settled without the least knowledge on the part of Rose, who would by all means remain a faithful spouse to Jesus. Rose refused to give her hand under any condition, though her mother entreated, threatened and even chastised her with the rod; many are the troubles and the tears she caused to Rose, who was strengthened from above to resist all inducements to change her holy resolution.

When twenty years of age, she obtained permission to enter the third Order of St. Dominic, in which condition she was still allowed to live at her home. Having entered this state of life, she increased

her mortifications to a greater extent, than ever before; she ate little and coarse food at that; she nearly always slept upon little blocks of wood and potsherds, at most she made use of simple boards; she wounded her tender body with an iron girdle, which she contracted so far, that it sunk deeply into her flesh; in order to be unable ever to relieve herself of the continual pain, she closed the girdle with a padlock, of which she threw away the key, so that she could not find it again; she always wore a wreath of metal from which stood forth many points, piercing her head.

Her parents and relatives regarding this as extreme folly strove by every, even abusive, means to induce her to leave her practices; these were wounds the more painful as they were struck by her dearest upon earth. With the invincible power, which she drew from Jesus, her once suffering spouse, she would not leave her holy mode of life, which can only be admired, but scarcely imitated. Her daily occupations were prayer and labor, spending ten hours in work, twelve in prayer and only two in sleep.

It is very natural, that in consequence of such exceeding mortifications she would often suffer great bodily pains; scarcely ever was she free from all oppressive sufferings. When broken down and exhausted by the many and great pains, she would try to conceal it as well as possible, and she suffered everything with a patience, which seemed more angelic than human. But this amiable Rose in the garden of God could not always enjoy the consolations, with which she was overwhelmed, for, besides the astonishing sufferings of the body, she was to pass the ordeal of spiritual dryness, anguish and desertion. It can not be told how heavily these trials bore upon her. Besides the devil himself appearing to her visibly in all his hideous forms, she felt her soul all empty and overcost with an apparently impenetrable darkness. She would force the thought of a speedy death upon herself, in order to console herself, but how cruelly was she deceived? Instead of meeting consolation she was tempted to doubt the immortality of her soul; moreover, the thought of being destined to eternal hell pressed so much upon her, that she could scarcely live with it. In her undaunted faith she would in spite of all burst out in the pitiable words: "O my God, O my gracious God, why hast Thou forsaken me? O my God, how long shalt Thou yet remain irritated at me, and how long must my heart yet sigh for Thee?" It seemed all should be in vain, she was ever haunted by the same cruel thoughts in what occupation soever she would find herself.—She stood the trial, and gloomy night was followed by a day so much the brighter; henceforth the grace of God, the dew of heaven, refreshed her heart, so parched by the fire of a terrible trial; now she was all buried in God and nothing could separate her from the love of Christ.

Our lovely saint could scarcely wait for the day of her dissolution; at length the day of her heavenly espousal came on. She

was thirty one years of age, when she was attacked with her last illness; her limbs were all paralyzed and a painful fever brought her near to death; physicians aid availed no more; all stood amazed at seeing this living image of our suffering Saviour.

During all these pains St. Rose maintained an unspeakable peace of mind and the full use of her senses. Having received the holy Eucharist, she bade farewell to all about her and breathing the words "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus be with me" she expired on the 24*th* of August, 1617. After death her body assumed the beauty of a living person and a sweet smile seemed to hover about her lips. Thus she appeared a Rose after death, as she had been during life. Many authentic miracles have been wrought through her intercession. Pope Clement X. canonized her in 1671 setting apart this day for her feast.—St. Rose is the first canonized saint of America.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O Almighty God, Thou giver of all good, who wouldst have blessed Rose, whom Thou hast prevened with the dew of heavenly grace, to flourish, in the Indies, with the beauties of virginity and patience, grant us, Thy servants, that following the odour of her sweetness, we may deserve to become the good odour of Christ, who with Thee and the Holy Ghost liveth, &c.

EPISTLE. (ii. *Cor.* x. 15., xi. 1—2.) Brethren: Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord: for not he that commendeth himself, is approved; but he whom God commendeth. Would to God you could bear with some little of my folly: but do bear with me. For I am jealous of you with the jealousy of God. For I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xxv. 1—13.) At that time: Jesus spoke to his disciples this parable: The kingdom of heaven shall be like to ten virgins, who taking their lamps went out to meet the bridegroom and the bride. And five of them were foolish, and five wise. But the five foolish, having taken their lamps, did not take oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with the lamps. And the bridegroom tarrying, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made: Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise: Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out. The wise answered,

saying: Lest perhaps there be not enough for us and for you, go you rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. Now whilst they went to buy, the bridegroom came: and they that were ready, went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. But at last came also the other virgins, saying: Lord, Lord open to us. But he answered, saying: Amen, I say to you, I know you not. Watch ye, therefore, because you know not the day nor the hour.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FESTIVAL OF THE HOLY GUARDIAN ANGELS.

[The first Sunday in September.]

Why is this Festival instituted?

That we may thank God, that He has given to every one and each of us a particular angel, who leads him or her through the dangers of this world to heaven; 2. that we may show ourselves grateful to the holy angels, who have done us so much good.

Is it certain, that every one has a special Guardian-angel?

Yes; for many passages in the Holy Scriptures attest it; ii. *Mos.* xxiii. 20, 21.—xii. *Ps.* xxxiii. 8.; xc. 11.—*Job* xxxiii. 23.—*Apost.* xii. 16., but especially the words of Christ: "Take heed that you despise not one of these little ones; for I say to you, that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven" (*Matt.* xviii. 10.); which words of the Saviour the holy Catholic Church has always expounded, that to every one is given a Special Guardian angel.

What is the office of Guardian angels?

To protect us from the dangers of body and soul. So it is written in *Ps.* xc. 11.: "For he hath given his angels charge over thee: to keep thee in all thy ways. In their hands they shall bear thee up: lest thou dash thy foot against a stone," that means that thou dost not sin, or that any other misfortune may not befall thee. "O what a great favor of God," exclaims St. Bernard at this, "O what wonderful love! Who has commanded? .... God! Whom has He commanded!.... The angels, those noble spirits, who share God's home! What has He commanded them? ... To protect and guard us poor mortals! O Lord! what is man that Thou art mindful of him!" The holy Guardian angels do the greatest services to the soul. They protect us in dangers and

temptations, warn us from evil, encourage to good, offer to God our prayers, stand by us in the hour of death. Yea, they minister to us after death, as Christ said that the poor Lazarus was carried, by the angels, into Abraham's bosom. (*Luke* xvi. 22.)

Have wicked men also an holy Guardian angel?

It is credible that the long suffering God protects the body of even the most hardened sinner, by an angel, that the sinner may not be lost before the time, but the holy angel can have no pleasure in a sinner. St. Basilius the Great says: "As smoke scatters the bees, and bad smell disperses the doves, so does horrible, lamentable sin turn from us the angel, the guardian of life. But if a sinner repents: then there is joy in heaven, as the Saviour asserts: There shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance!" (*Luke* xv. 10.)

What do we owe the holy Guardian angel?

According to the doctrine of St. Bernard: 1.) Reverence on account of his presence, on which account we must do nothing in his presence we should be ashamed of before an honourable man; 2.) Gratitude for the solicitude he has for us; 3.) Confidence and love, by virtue of which we turn to him and entreat his protection in all difficulties, desires and temptations.

What consolation does the presence of the holy Guardian angel give us?

That of being fearless and courageous in all dangers of the body and soul, for "of whom need we be afraid," writes St. Bernard, "with such powerful protectors?" They cannot be conquered nor be seduced away, still less seduce any one away, they who protect us, in all our paths. They are faithful, mighty and wise, why should we tremble? Only let us follow them, cling to them, and remain under the protection of God, the Lord of Heaven.

What ought we to do on the present day?

We ought to spend the present day in the most devout manner, reverencing the holy Guardian angel, and thanking him for all the benefits received through the course of one's whole life, ask his pardon for the vexation we may have caused him through our sins, recommend ourselves again to his protection and promise him constant fidelity and obedience.

PRAYER. Almighty, eternal God! Thou, who in Thy great goodness hast given to all mankind from their birth a guardian angel, grant that I may honor, love and obey my guardian angel, that through Thy grace and his protection, I may be saved and in the future may eternally behold in heaven Thy divine face with him and all the Saints.

O ye holy guardian angels, defend us in the combat that we may not perish on the dreadful day of judgment.

At the commencement of the mass the Church sings: Bless the Lord, all ye his angels: you that are mighty in strength, and execute his word, hearkening to the voice of his orders. Allel. Allel. Bless the Lord, O my soul! let all that is within me praise his holy name. (*Ps.* cii.) Glory be to the Father, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who, in Thy wonderful providence, hast been pleased to appoint Thy holy angels as our guardians: mercifully hear our prayers, and grant that we may rest secure under their protection, and enjoy their fellowship in heaven for ever. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Exod.* xxiii. 20—23.) Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will send my angel, who shall go before thee, and keep thee in thy journey, and bring thee into the place that I have prepared. Take notice of him, and hear his voice, and do not think him one to be contemned: for he will not forgive when thou hast sinned, and my name is in him. But if thou wilt hear his voice, and do all that I speak, I will be an enemy to thy enemies, and will afflict them that afflict thee. And my angel shall go before thee.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xviii. 1—10.) At that time: The disciples came to Jesus saying: Who, thinkest thou is the greater in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus calling unto him a little child, set him in the midst of them, and said: Amen I say to you, unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greater in the kingdom of heaven. And he that shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me. But he that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in me, it were better for him that a mill-stone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea. Wo to the world because of scandals. For it must needs be that scandals come: but nevertheless wo to that man by whom the scandal cometh. And if thy hand or thy foot scandalize thee, cut it off, and cast it from

thee. It is better for thee to go into life maimed or lame, than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thy eye scandalize thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee. It is better for thee having one eye to enter into life, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire. See that you despise not one of these little ones: for I say to you, that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.

LESSONS. I. Christ had often distinguished the holy apostle Peter above the other apostles—particularly on account of the zeal of his faith, upon which the others, not yet enlightened by the Holy Ghost, became jealous and addressed Jesus with this question: Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Jesus, who saw into the recesses of their hearts and knew well that true humility was yet wanting to the apostles, took a child, placed it in their midst and said: "If you do not become as humble, simple, open, confiding and believing as children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, but if ye become as humble in mind as a child: ye will not only gain the kingdom of heaven, but gain the highest place there.—What a high and necessary virtue is then humility!

II. From the dreadful punishment, which Christ threatens him who scandalizes a child—that is to say, who seduces him by words or actions to wickedness—is to be inferred, what a dreadful sin scandal is. It is indeed not possible, as Christ says, on account of the great moral depravity of the children of men, that scandals should not come, but "Woe to that man by whom the scandal cometh." What a sin must that be, at whose wickedness the gentle Jesus cries out: "Woe!"—Beware of giving any one occasion to sin, that upon you this woe may not come!

III. Christ commands us to cut off and throw away the members that offend us, whereby He wishes to teach us, that if we love anything in the world as well as a hand or an eye and it gives us occasion to sin, we must separate ourselves from it earnestly and at once.—If therefore thou observest that thine heart has pleasure in anything, in a person, in a company, that does not lead to God, but rather to sin: then leave and forsake it, for it is better to lose a temporal thing, an earthly joy, for the sake of God, than to suffer eternal torment.

IV. But the strongest motive, which is to keep us from causing any scandal, is because we offend God and afflict the holy angels by such an offence, who for this will one day be our severest and strictest accusers.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF MARY'S NATIVITY.

[September 8.]

Why does the Church celebrate this festival?

Because the day of the blessed Virgin's birth, which was so holy and immaculate, is one of universal joy to the whole world.

Why then does Mary's birth cause such great joy?

To this the Church answers beautifully with the Antiphon of the Magnificat, which says: "O Virgin, Mother of God, Thy birth has announced joy to the whole world, for from Thee, has proceeded the Sun of Justice, Christ our Lord, who, by taking away the curse, has shed benediction and, who by confounding death, has given us everlasting life." This curse, caused by our first parents' sin in paradise, burdened the whole earth and especially mankind, for "sin, having come into the world by one man, it passed upon all, since all have sinned in this one."

It was in consequence to original sin, that mankind was covered with such a darkness, that led men to ignore their Creator, whilst they on the other hand prostrated themselves to creatures and adored idols of their own construction.

Finally the hour of redemption had come. The infant was born, who was predestined by God to become the mother of the promised Saviour, and who was consequently to crush the head of the serpent. How then ought this festival to spread joy through the world, since after such ardent desires salvation is at last about to appear! For Jesus, the Saviour, our Lord and God, the Light of the world, the Sun of Justice, is to come forth from Mary; that darkness, which had overshadowed all nations is about to disappear, the knowledge of God shall abound, the bonds of sin, in which mankind lay fettered, shall be loosed, the curse so long resting upon creation shall be taken away,— in a word, the fulness of benediction shall reign upon earth. To-day even death is put to shame, for she is born, from whom shall come forth the Conqueror of death, who, depriving death of its sting, shall guide us unto perpetual life. Such are the glorious hopes, that Mary's birth awakes in us, promising at the same time the speedy fulfilment of them. Then, as St. Peter Damian says, let us rejoice in Mary, the most blessed Mother of God, for she bears a new message unto the world, being the beginning of man's salvation; let us rejoice in the day, on which was born the Queen of the World, the Gate of Heaven, the Portal of Paradise, the Tent of God, the Star of the Sea and the Ladder of Heaven, upon which the Supreme King in infinite humility deigned to descend to us, and

upon which we may rise from our dust to heaven. To-day the most glorious Virgin is born, from whom shall proceed, as a bridegroom from his chamber, the most beautiful of the sons of man; to-day she leaves her mother's womb, who deserves to be the temple of God.

At the Introit of the Mass the Church sings: All the rich among the people shall entreat thy countenance: after her shall virgins be brought to the king: her neighbours shall be brought to thee in joy and gladness. My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the King. (*Ps.* xliv.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, we beseech Thee, O Almighty God, that Thy faithful, who rejoice under the name and protection of the most blessed Virgin Mary, may, by her pious intercession, be delivered from all evils here on earth, and be brought to the eternal joys of heaven. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Prov.* viii. 22—35.) The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, before he made any thing, from the beginning. I was set up from eternity, and of old, before the earth was made. The depths were not as yet, and I was already conceived; neither had the fountains of waters as yet sprung out; the mountains with their huge bulk had not as yet been established: before the hills I was brought forth; he had not yet made the earth, nor the rivers, nor the poles of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was present: when, with a certain law and compass, he enclosed the depths; when he established the sky above, and poised the fountains of waters; when he compassed the sea with its bounds, and set a law to the waters that they should not pass their limits; when he balanced the foundations of the earth; I was with him, forming all things, and was delighted every day, playing before him at all times, playing in the world: and my delights were to be with the children of men. Now, therefore, ye children, hear me: blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, and that watcheth daily at my gates, and waiteth at the posts of my doors. He that shall find me, shall find life, and shall have salvation from the Lord.

EXPLANATION AND APPLICATION. Above all this lesson is a eulogy on the divine, uncreated Wisdom, the eternal Son of God, through whom all is made, arranged and provided for, who

rejoices at and loves his works, and invites man to love, follow and worship Him, whilst He extends to him temporal and eternal happiness in turn for it. The Church, however, reads this lesson on this festival, because the most of it is also applicable to Mary. For, truly, she can be said to excel all creatures in holiness, and to enjoy a place nearer to God, than any other being. And for this reason does the Church refer to her these words of the Wise Man: "I came out of the mouth of the Most High, the first-born before all creatures." (*Eccli* xxiv. 5.) For she is, as says St. Richard, the most worthy of all, and that no one can ever arrive at the full measure of her purity or any other of her supernatural gifts; nor does therefore any creature display the wonders of God's bounty in a degree equal to that of Mary. Do thou then also, O pious soul, admire this masterwork of the Almighty and rejoice in it. But let not mere admiration suffice, hear the words, that Mary addresses to you in this lesson: "Now, therefore, ye children, hear me: "Blessed are they that keep my ways" (*Prov.* viii. 32.), which means, follow her footprints, walking before God in humility, innocence and meekness as she has done. "Blessed is the man that heareth me, and that watcheth daily at my gates, and waiteth at the posts of my doors." (*Ib.* 34.) According to St. Alphonsus Mary also calls upon us: "Blessed he, who listeneth to my counsels, and fatigueeth not at the gate of my mercy, invoking my intercession and aid. He that shall find me, shall find life, and shall have salvation from the Lord." St. Bonaventure also exclaims: "Ye all, who thirst for the kingdom of God, O hear what is promised you, namely life and salvation, if ye but honor Mary." Therefore often make use of the following words of St. Chrysostom: "Hail Mary, Mother of God and of us, hail heaven in which dwelleth God Himself, hail Throne of grace, whence God distributeth his graces unto us, oh, ever intercede for us with Jesus, so that owing to thy prayer we may obtain pardon of our sins and eternal happiness."

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* i. 1—16.) The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham begot Isaac; and Isaac begot Jacob; and Jacob begot Judas, and his brethren; and Judas begot Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begot Esron; and Esron begot Aram; and Aram begot Aminadab; and Aminadab begot Naasson; and Naasson begot Salmon; and Salmon begot Booz of Rahab; and Booz begot Obed of Ruth; and Obed begot Jesse; and Jesse begot David the king. And David the king begot Solomon, of her that had been the wife of Urias; and Solomon begot Roboam; and Roboam begot Abia; and Abia begot

Asa; and Asa begot Josaphat; and Josaphat begot Joram; and Joram begot Ozias; and Ozias begot Joatham; and Joatham begot Achaz; and Achaz begot Ezechias; and Ezechias begot Manasses; and Manasses begot Amon; and Amon begot Josias; and Josias begot Jechonias and his brethren, in the transmigration of Babylon. And, after the transmigration of Babylon, Jechonias begot Salathiel; and Salathiel begot Zorobabel; and Zorobabel begot Abiud; and Abiud begot Eliacim; and Eliacim begot Azor; and Azor begot Sadoc; and Sadoc begot Achim; and Achim begot Eliud; and Eliud begot Eleazar; and Eleazar begot Mathan; and Mathan begot Jacob; and Jacob begot Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

Why does St. Matthew commence his gospel by enumerating Christ's birth according to the flesh?

In order to confute those sectarians, who denied, that Christ has a real body, maintaining that it was but a phantom-body. Hence it is, that St. Matthew enumerates singly the forefathers from whom Christ descended according to His sacred humanity.

Why are even sinful women mentioned in the genealogy of Christ?

In order to show, that Christ, who for the sake of sinners came down from heaven, disdained not to descend from such, thus to inspire all sinners with the hope of salvation and to extinguish the sins of all. Moreover, this is to teach us, that we need not blush at the faults of parents or relatives, provided we share them not; nor need we at all be ashamed of their humble conditions, in like manner as genuine nobility is displayed in own virtues and not in the deeds of ancestors.

Why is Joseph's, and not Mary's, genealogy read?

Because it was custom among the Jews, that wards should receive the name, and also inherit the rights of their fosterfathers, such as Joseph was to Jesus; and Mary, being the only daughter of her father and therefore sole heiress, was obliged to take a husband out of her own tribe and family, according to the law (iv. *Mos.* xxxvi. 6.); hence it follows also that Mary was of the tribe of David. St. Luke details this in chapter iii. (23—38.) of his gospel, where he gives Mary's genealogy, enumerating her ancestors from Adam to Heli, that is Joachim, the father of Mary.

Why does St. Matthew not say, Joseph begot Jesus; but only mentions Joseph as Mary's husband?

To evince, that Jesus was not begotten in Mary by Joseph, but supernaturally by the Holy Ghost. (*Luke* i. 31—35.)

O most pure and spotless Virgin! how beautiful and perfect thou art. Never hast thou suffered from a single stain. I desire, that all the world should recognise thee as that perfect and spotless dove, which thy divine bridegroom declares thee to be; as that closed up garden, the favorite dwelling place of God, as that white lily growing among thorns, that is the children of Adam, who come into the world already sullied with sin and as enemies to God. I too am born a sinner, yea, after baptism I have voluntarily stained my soul with sins. Oh, then, immaculate Mother, do thou assist me in recovering my innocence, so that Jesus, thy Son, may at the hour of my death receive me into the number of his elect. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS.

[September 14.]

From what does this feast derive its name?

From the consecration of the Church of the holy Cross at Jerusalem, built by the Emperor Constantine, Son of St. Helena, and in which on this day the wood of the holy Cross is upheld for public veneration.

When was this festival with especial solemnity celebrated?

When the Cross, which Cosroes, King of the Persians, had captured at the conquest of Jerusalem and had for forty years in his power, was recaptured by the Emperor Heraclius, who carried it himself on his own shoulders to Mount Calvary into the Church of the holy Cross.

What miracle occurred on this occasion?

When, the Emperor from reverence wished to carry the Cross upon his own shoulders to its appointed place, he was unable to lift it, until, advised by the Patriarch Zacharias, he laid aside his imperial garments, clothed himself poorly, took off his shoes, and made himself like the humble Saviour.

Let us learn from this, how the divine Saviour dislikes extravagance in dress, and how in all humility and poverty we should follow Him who was poor and humble.

[For further Instruction on the holy Cross, as also the Epistle of this day, see the Festival of the Finding of the holy Cross.]

GOSPEL. (*John* xii. 31—36.) At that time: Jesus said to the multitude of the Jews: Now is the judgment of the world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And

I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself. (Now this he said signifying what death he should die.) The multitude answered him: we have heard out of the law, that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou: The Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man? Jesus therefore said to them: Yet a little while, the light is among you. Walk whilst you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not. And he that walketh in darkness, knoweth not whither he goeth. Whilst you have the light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who this day fillest Thy people with joy, by the yearly solemnity of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross: grant, we beseech Thee, that as we believe the sacred mystery of our redemption in this mortal life, so we may feel the effects thereof in the life to come. Thro'.

SHORT INSTRUCTION ON THE WAY OF THE CROSS.

What is meant by the Way of the Cross?

THE Way of the Cross is a devotion, approved by the Pope, in which, as the custom was in old times, we commemorate Christ's sufferings, and especially the last journey to Mount Calvary.

How did this devotion originate?

In this manner: The path-way which our Lord Jesus Christ had to follow from Jerusalem to Mount Calvary, where He suffered the death of the cross, was the real Way of the Cross. His holy Mother and other pious women as also the beloved disciple St. John, went this painful way with Him (*Matt.* xxvii. 56.; *John* xix. 25, 26.), and the apostles and early Christians animated by veneration for these places, made sacred by the sufferings and death of Jesus, often followed the same path-way. In the same spirit in later times came many from the most distant countries to Jerusalem, to visit these sacred places and fire their devotion. In time pictures, representing different scenes in the sufering of our Lord, were erected along this route and were called Stations; and when the Saracens conquered the Holy Land, so that visits to it were most perilous, the Roman pontiffs permitted the erection of stations of the cross in other countries. The first to erect stations in their Churches, were members of the Franciscan Order, and by degrees this devotion, supported by the Roman pontiffs and favored by indulgences, spread throughout the entire Church. A path-way was sought which led to ele-

vated ground; this elevation was called the Mount of the Cross or Mount Calvary, and along the route pictures representing our Lord's sufferings, as related by the evangelists or made known by tradition, were erected, or else the pictures were hung in Churches, and the place where they stood or the pictures themselves, were called stations; there are generally fourteen of these.

Is the practice of this devotion of the Way of the Cross of great value?

Next the Sacrifice of holy Mass and holy Communion, there is certainly no devotion which better represents to us the sufferings and death of Christ than the Way of the Cross. St. Albert the Great says: "A simple remembrance of Christ's sufferings is worth more than fasting on bread and water on every Friday for a year, and scourging one's self until the blood comes." St. Bernard gives us the reason of this, when he says: "Who can consider the sufferings of Christ and be so devoid of religion as to remain untouched by them? so proud, that he will not humble himself, so vindictive, that he will not forgive, so fond of pleasure, that he will not abstain from it, so hardhearted, that he does not repent of his sins?" And St. Augustine says: "What pride, what avarice, what anger can be cured otherwise than by the humility, by the poverty, the patience of the Son of God? And all these virtues are found in careful meditation on that way of pain which our Saviour went, and along which we should follow Him." On this account several of the popes, among others Clement XII. and Benedict XIV., have granted many indulgences for the performance of this devotion, indulgences which may be applied to the suffering souls in purgatory.

[For the manner of meditating on the sufferings of Christ, see the Instruction for Good Friday.]

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. MATTHEW, APOSTLE.

[September 21.]

MAtthew, before his conversion called Levi, was a Galilean, a son of Alpheus (*Mark* ii. 14.), consequently a brother of St. James the Less, another of the apostles. (*Mark* iii. 18.) Matthew was a collector of the toll which the Jews were obliged to pay to the Roman emperors, and was called from his custom-house by our Lord to be an apostle. In his gospel which he wrote later, he calls himself from humility always by his early designation, Matthew the Publican. He followed Jesus faith-

fully, and after the descent of the Holy Ghost remained, as the historical writers Eusebius and Epiphanus inform us, in Judea and its neighborhood, until just before the destruction of Jerusalem when the apostles dispersed, and went into foreign lands to preach the doctrine of Christ. When obliged to separate from the recent converts in Jerusalem, Matthew wrote his gospel to leave with them in place of his presence among them, and was the first to write concerning our Lord's life upon earth. He led a rigorous life, prayed much, never touched meat, and lived on herbs, roots, and wild fruits. He was at last stabbed by the Ethiopian King Hirtakus, as the generality of writers inform us, while standing at the altar and offering the sacrifice of Mass, because the saint had refused consent to the king's marriage with the virgin Eugenia who was dedicated to God. His sacred remains were, in the tenth century, brought to Salerno, Naples, where they are still highly venerated.

Matthew was the first to write a gospel. How proper it is, that he who after many sins becomes converted, should be the first to announce the infinite mercy of the Redeemer who came into this world not to call the just, but sinners.

In the Introit of the Mass, the Church sings: The mouth of the just man shall meditate wisdom, and his tongue speak judgment: the law of his God is in his heart. Be not emulous of evil doers, nor envy them that work iniquity. Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Grant, O Lord, we may be aided by the prayers of blessed Matthew, the apostle and evangelist: that what we cannot obtain by our own weakness, may be granted us by his intercession. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Ezech.* i. 10—14.) The likeness of the four living creatures was this: there was the face of a man, and the face of a lion on the right side of all the four; and the face of an ox on the left side of all the four; and the face of an eagle over all the four. And their faces and their wings were stretched upward: two wings of every one were joined, and two covered their bodies. And every one of them went straight forward: whither the impulse of the spirit was to go, thither they went, and they turned not when they went. And as for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like that of burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps. This was the vision running to and fro in the midst of the living creatures, a bright fire, and lightning going forth from the fire. And the living creatures ran and returned like flashes of lightning.

EXPLANATION. The four living creatures who were Cherubim, that is, powers of heaven, many holy fathers understand to be emblems of the four Evangelists, as these represent Christ in His fourfold attributes of Man, King, Priest, and God. The emblem of man is given, therefore, to St. Matthew, because he relates the birth of Christ according to humanity; of a lion to St. Mark, because he describes Christ as King; of an ox who was slaughtered by the Jews as a sacrifice to St. Luke, because he represents Christ as High Priest who was Himself the sacrifice; of an eagle to St. John, because he soared like an eagle to the heavenly heights, and relates the divinity of Christ and His eternal origin.

Let us agree with heart and with lips to the sacred doctrines of the four Evangelists, and let us be staggered by nothing we find in their writing.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* ix. 9—13.) At that time: Jesus saw a man sitting in the custom-house, named Matthew; and he said to him: Follow me. And he arose up, and followed him. And it came to pass as he was sitting at meat in the house, behold many publicans and sinners came, and sat down with Jesus and his disciples. And the Pharisees seeing it, said to his disciples: Why doth your master eat with publicans and sinners? But Jesus hearing it, said: They that are in health, need not a physician, but they that are ill. Go then and learn what this meaneth. I will have mercy, and not sacrifice. For I am not come to call the just, but sinners.

Why were the publicans so hated by the Jews?

Because the Jews regarded it as most unjust and sinful, that they should be subjected to the pagan Romans and obliged to pay taxes to them, and as the publicans hired the collection of the taxes from the Romans, and were desirous to receive a large proportion of them for themselves, they were guilty of much injustice and extortion, were therefore hated by the Jews, and regarded as so unprincipled, that the words publican and sinner became synonymous.

What do we learn from Matthew's immediate following of Christ?

That we should at once obey the call to penance, that Christ may not cease to call, and draw His grace from us; that we should not only avoid sin but also the occasions of it, as Matthew not only avoided sin, but abandoned the business of a publican, which gave him opportunities for sin, and followed Christ.

How did he live after his conversion?

After his conversion Matthew strove to be like Christ poor and humble, meek and patient, good and charitable; for he who wishes to follow Christ, must walk as He walked (*John* ii. 6.), must take up his cross of daily trials, and patiently carry it after Christ. Matthew did this unceasingly all his life.

Why was Jesus willing to eat with sinners?

That He might use the occasion to convert them by giving their souls His words for food.

Well would it be for us, if at our meals, instead of vain and often quarrelsome conversation, we were to speak of God and, sacred things, thus gaining by God's grace souls for God and heaven, and promoting His honor. As St. Dionysius says, among all good things which are agreeable to God, the greatest, the divine one, so to say, is to aid in the conversion of sinners.

Who are those in health, who the sick, who the physician?

Those in health are the just who live in the grace of God. O what a valuable life is this, and what great care is required to preserve it! The sick are the sinners, for every sin makes the soul unclean, wounds and even kills it, that is, robs it of the grace and good-pleasure of God, in which consists the spiritual life of the soul. How hateful, then, is sin, which steals from her the highest good! The physician is Christ, of whom it is said in Psalm cvi.: He sent his word (Christ) and healed them. If thou hast sinned, go to this physician to be healed, that thou mayst regain thy soul's health.

Why does Christ say: I will have mercy and not sacrifice?

Because the Pharisees thought every thing of external sacrifice and considered if they only diligently offered, that they were already pleasing to God, even though they showed no mercy and combatted not against their corrupt inclinations to anger, envy, malice, and pride. But the sacrifice of our prayers, our good works and mortifications, will not please God, unless they come from pure love to Him, far less if they come from a proud, vindictive and impure heart, and if we out of regard for ourselves fail to do deeds of mercy to our neighbor.

What did Christ mean by saying: I am not come to call the just but sinners?

Sts. Hilary, Jerome and Bede understand these just to be the Pharisees, who pretended to be just in all things, and would not receive the call of Jesus, even if he had called them; Jesus knowing this, he called those, whom the Pharisees regarded very great sinners, who, however, humbly heard and followed the call of Jesus.

PRAYER TO ST. MATTHEW. O holy Apostle, who after thy conversion didst prepare Christ a fine banquet, and a yet more glorious feast for us in thy holy gospel, for it is like the book which the angel gave to Ezechiel to eat and which was as sweet as honey in his mouth (*Ezech.* iii. 3.), may it be a food for my soul. Implore for me the grace to read it with attention and in the spirit and meaning of the holy Catholic Church, to meditate upon it, and to live in accordance with thy words, written by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, so that I may say with the Psalmist: How sweet are thy words to my palate; more than honey to my mouth. (*Ps.* cxviii. 103.)

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF THE HOLY ARCHANGEL MICHAEL.

[September 29.]

THE Prophet Daniel calls the holy Angel Michael the prince of the angels (x. 13.); the holy Apostle Judas names him an archangel, and John in the Apocalypse describes the contest between him and Lucifer, in which St. Michael drove the other out of heaven. Who then can doubt, that the Archangel Michael from the beginning of the world's creation has been highly honored by God? Several miraculous visions of this holy archangel on Mount Gargano in Italy and at Tuba in France, and many wonderful graces which God granted trough his intercession, gave special occasion in the sixth and seventh centuries to his public veneration and to the instituting of festivals in his honor. He is also deserving of special honor, because God has given him to His holy Church as her protector, as He had previously given him to the Jewish synagogues; as he carefully guarded the Jewish people entrusted to him, so he guards the children of God's Church, placed under his care, preserving them in the true faith, defending them against temptations in life, but especially against the attacks of Satan in the hour of death, for which reason our mother, the Church, exhorts us often to turn to this holy archangel, saying: "Holy Archangel Michael, protect us in the battle, that we may not perish at the terrible judgment."

The Introit of Mass as on the Feast of the Guardian Angels, as also the Gospel, which treats of scandal, is read on this day, because St. Michael so bravely resisted the scandal of Satan,

conquering him and driving him with his followers from heaven. (*Apoc.* xii. 7—9.)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who, by a wonderful order, hast regulated the ministry of angels and men, grant that those who are always ministering before Thee in heaven, may defend our lives here on earth. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Apoc.* i. 1—5.) In those days: God gave unto him to make known to his servants the things which must shortly come to pass: and signified, sending by his angel to his servant John: who hath given testimony to the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ, what things soever he hath seen. Blessed is he, that readeth and heareth the words of this prophecy: and keepeth these things which are written in it. For the time is at hand. John to the seven churches which are in Asia. Grace be unto you and peace from him that is, and that was, and that is to come, and from the seven spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth, who hath loved us, and hath washed us from our sins in his own blood.

EXPLANATION. This lesson is the beginning of the mysterious revelation which St. John received on the Island of Patmos, and in which in a series of allegories he presents a perfect picture of the fate of the Church of God from its first contest until its final victory at the end of the world. The seven spirits before the throne of God, are those holy angels to whom God has given the greatest power to work for our salvation, among them the holy Archangel Michael.

See how good God is to us, since He gives us such powerful spirits, the nearest to His throne, to be our special protectors.

[For the Gospel see the Feast of the Guardian Angels.]

PRAYER TO THE ARCHANGEL MICHAEL.

Great prince of heaven, St. Michael, I commend my body and soul to thy protection, from this day henceforth I choose thee for my daily protector and intercessor, and I beseech thee graciously to assist me now and at all times, but especially at the end of my life. Keep me from timidity and obtain for me from God the remission of my sins and complete resignation to His divine will, so that my soul, consoled and cheerful, may leave my body; receive her then according to thy office, and lead her through the ranks of thy holy

comrades to the face of God, in the enjoyment of whose presence she will be eternally blessed. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FESTIVAL OF THE HOLY ROSARY.

[On the first Sunday in October.]

When St. Dominic, in 1208, had preached for a long time with burning zeal against the heresy of the Albigenses, but had moved but few to return to the Church, he redoubled his prayers and penitential works, turning himself with special devotion to the Queen of Heaven, Mary, praying to her with tears to move the hearts of these heretics and to assist him in his labors for the salvation of souls. The Mother of Mercy then appeared to him and taught him the prayer of the rosary, which he then, strengthened by the high privilege shown him by the Mother of God, everywhere announced and taught. In a short time over a hundred thousand heretics were brought back to the bosom of the holy Catholic Church, and the devotion spread rapidly over the whole Christian world. Fraternities were formed and the Supreme Pontiff permitted the Brothers Preachers, to celebrate the Festival of the Rosary; this was observed with great solemnity. On the seventh of October of the 1571, the Christians, under the special protection of Mary, the Queen of Heaven, gained a glorious victory over the Turks, the Festival of the Rosary being at that time celebrated at Rome and in the provinces with public processions, in order that by her intercession the Turks might be restrained in their oppressions. This victory was justly considered as the effect of Mary's intercession, and the holy Pope Pius V. instituted a festival of gratitude for this day, which was called "Mary of Victory". This was united by Pope Gregory XIII. with the Festival of the Rosary and fixed for the first Sunday in October. On account of a victory gained by Mary's intercession over the Turks, Pope Clement XI. ordered it to be celebrated by the whole Church, "that the hearts of the faithful might be thereby incited to the greater veneration of the blessed Virgin, and that the grateful remembrance of the great help, received from above, might never pass away."

What is the rosary?

It is a form of prayer in which there is said the Apostles' Creed, the doxology "Glory be to the Father, &c.", and fifty times the "Hail Mary", with an "Our Father" before each ten "Hail Marys"; each decade of "Hail Mary" is followed by a meditation upon one of the mysteries of the redemption. This is the smaller and more common rosary. The larger consists of the

apostles' creed, of fifteen decades, every decade of ten "Hail Mary", preceded by an "Our Father", and of fifteen meditations on the mysteries of our redemption. It is called the psalter, because it contains a hundred and fifty "Hail Marys" as David's psalter contains a hundred and fifty psalms.

This prayer is called the rosary, because every Hail Mary is like a flower in the wreath crowning the heavenly Queen, whom the Church calls by the significant title of "Mystical Rose". Every rose has green leaves and sharp thorns besides the flower itself; in the rosary the thorns represent the sorrowful, the green leaves the joyful, and the flower the glorious mysteries of the redemption which are meditated upon in the rosary. The holy fathers also compare this devotion to a crown, of which they say: "Its twelve diamonds are the twelve articles of the apostles' creed, the

fifteen "Our Fathers" so many brilliant golden stars, and one hundred and fifty "Hail Marys" roses."

How many parts are there in the rosary?

Three: the joyful, the sorrowful, the glorious.

I. The joyful are the first five decades by which we recall and meditate upon the mysteries of the incarnation and the joy of Mary's heart in her divine child:

1. Whom thou hast conceived while still a virgin;
2. Whom thou hast borne to Elizabeth;
3. Whom thou, still a virgin, hast brought forth;
4. Whom thou hast offered to God in the temple;
5. Whom thou hast found in the temple.

This rosary is usually said from Advent until Lent, during which time the Church commemorates the joyful coming of Christ.

II. The sorrowful has also five decades in which are especially represented for meditation the sorrowful mysteries of the sufferings of Christ:

1. Who sweat blood for us;
2. Who was scourged for our sins;
3. Who was crowned with thorns;
4. Who bore the cross for us;
5. Who died on the cross for us.

This rosary is usually said during Lent, because the Church at that time places the sufferings of Jesus especially before us.

III. The glorious mysteries have likewise five decades, in which we meditate upon the glory of Christ and His blessed Mother, and we commemorate Him:

1. Who rose from the dead;
2. Who ascended into heaven;
3. Who sent down the Holy Ghost;
4. Who received thee, O Virgin, into heaven;
5. Who crowned thee, O Virgin, in heaven.

This rosary is said from Easter to Advent, because the Church then presents us these mysteries for our veneration and meditation.

Are the unbelievers, and those who call themselves enlightened Catholics, right when they look with contempt upon the rosary?

Certainly not, for they despise that which they neither practise nor understand; for whoever considers the arrangement and significance of this most honorable prayer, must esteem it most highly and practise it for His soul's salvation. Without taking into consideration that the greatest saints said this prayer daily, such saints as St. Francis de Sales, St. Alphonsus Liguori, and others, it is a confession of our holy Roman Catholic faith, a repeated adoration of the Most Holy Trinity, and an authorized

veneration of the blessed Virgin, whom the Holy Ghost has pronounced blessed. It is at the same time a grateful recollection and meditation upon the most profound and most sacred mysteries of our holy religion, and especially of our redemption through the incarnation, sufferings, and death of our Lord. And in regard to the frequent repetition of the "Our Father" and "Hail Mary", do not the angels and saints before the throne of the Most Holy Trinity again and again repeat: "Holy, Holy, Holy!" Can the heart filled with the true, sincere love of God and Mary, often enough repeat their praises? Can any one ever have enough of this exaltation of love and praise? Do we not daily, even often during the day, partake of the same kind of bread, without its becoming indifferent, annoying, or distasteful to us?

How acceptable to God is this holy rosary — this beautiful garland of fragrant, heavenly flowers of prayer and meditation — and what power it has at the throne of His omnipotence and mercy! This God manifested at its introduction, as He has always since in a marvellous manner, especially upon occasions of great and particular hardships and cares; and on this account the Church exhorts the faithful to its diligent practice, attaching many indulgences to its devout performance in a spirit of penance, when in a state of grace.*)

Do not, therefore, my dear Christian, permit yourself to be misled by those, who not only do not perform this devotion, but even despise it, and in their overweening presumption often do not pay attention to the gravest regulations of the Church. To them are applicable the words of Christ: I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones. (*Matt.* xi. 25.) Practise this devotion all the more zealously in the spirit and sense of our holy Church, and you will perceive in yourself the beneficent good that will accrue to your soul from it.

How should we say the rosary?

Attentively and devoutly. To pray devoutly we must pray not with the lips only, but with the heart; we must meditate upon the mystery under consideration, with great recollection and concentration of thought, must rejoice with Mary in the joyful rosary and thank God for the incarnation, compassionate His sufferings in the sorrowful, and be sorry of our sins which inflicted those sufferings upon Him; wish happiness to Him and His Virgin Mother at the glorious mysteries for their magnificence, and firmly resolve with the grace of God to make use of every means in our power to obtain for ourselves the glory of heaven. If the rosary is said in this way, we shall assuredly reap great benefit from it.

*) As by Pope Alexander IV. in the year 1291, Sixtus V. in 1474, and Pius V. an indulgence of five years and forty days.

We should let nothing prevent us from saying the rosary, and never be ashamed to carry our rosary with us always as a sign, that we love and honor Jesus and Mary. For the rosary has justly become a badge of the true follower of Jesus and Mary, of the real Catholic; and who is ashamed of being a Catholic?

[The Introit of the Mass as on the Feast of the Assumption.]

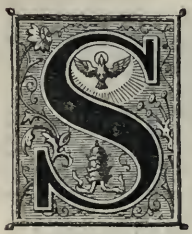
PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, whose only Son, by his life, death, and resurrection, hath obtained for us the rewards of eternal salvation: grant, we beseech Thee, that meditating on these mysteries in the most holy Rosary of the B. V. M. we may imitate what they contain, and come to the happiness which they promise. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Eccl.* xxiv. 14—16.) From the beginning, and before the world, was I created, and unto the world to come I shall not cease to be, and in the holy dwelling place have I ministered before him. And so was I established in Sion, and in the holy city likewise I rested, and my power was in Jerusalem. And I took root in an honourable people, and in the portion of my God his inheritance, and my abode is in the full assembly of saints.

[For Explanation see the Festivals of the Assumption and the Immaculate Conception. The Gospel and its Explanation will be found in the Instruction for the third Sunday of Lent, beginning with the twenty seventh verse.]

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI.

[October 4.]



T. Francis was born at Assisi, a city in the dukedom of Spoleto, Italy, in the year 1181. His father, a rich merchant, destined him for the same business, in which Francis did really and skilfully engage. Although fond of show he, at a very early age, manifested a great love for the poor. Agreeable and kindhearted, amiable and pleasant to all, he was beloved by all surrounding him, and the world sought to secure him for its own, but the love of God conquered the love of the world; enlightened from on high and rendered by heavenly visions attentive to the coming call, he followed the guidings of grace which drew him to follow Christ in humility and poverty. He one day heard at Mass the words: Do not

possess gold nor silver, nor money in your purses, nor scrip for jour journey, nor two coats, nor shoes, nor a staff, and struck by them he regulated his whole life by them, commenced immediately to preach penance with such evangelical poverty and with so much power, that all his hearers were moved to tears. He was disinherited by his avaricious father, who was greatly displeased at his poverty and generosity to the poor, so that Francis threw himself entirely upon the providence of his Father in heaven, begging from door to door, and dividing the alms he thus obtained with the poor.

This extraordinary way of life soon brought him disciples, for whom, as their number increased, he prescribed a rule of life, and then journeyed to Rome to have it approved by the pope. He returned, full of holy rejoicing, that all had succeeded at Rome as he wished, and settled beside a little Church, belonging to the Benedictines, about a mile from the place of his birth, which he called Portiuncula (small portion). Here he lived in the performance of the strictest penance, here he prayed day and night, and here he laid the foundation of that order, which was to fill the whole earth with the radiance of its virtues. In this Church, which was dedicated to the Virgin Mother of Christ and to the

holy angels, he received from Christ Himself the celebrated indulgence known by the whole Christian world as the Portiuncula Indulgence.

For when, in the year 1221 on the anniversary of the Church's consecration, the saint was praying there with fervent devotion, our Lord appeared to Him, and said: "Francis, demand what thou wilt for the salvation of nations." "I ask," replied the saint, "the remission of the guilt and punishment, a plenary indulgence for all that shall visit this Church with a contrite heart and confess their sins." "Go, then," said our Lord, "to my representative, the pope, and demand this indulgence in my name." Francis went at once to the Pope Honorius III., who first by word of mouth, and later by a proper Bull confirmed the indulgence, which was afterwards extended to all the Churches of the Franciscan Order.

Thus burning for the salvation of nations, Francis with his brothers whom he sent out two by two to preach penance and the peace of God, exerted himself to spread everywhere the kingdom of God. His love for sinners and his ardent zeal for the salvation of souls, urged him to travel over far distant parts of the world and preach the gospel to the infidels. And for this also God rewarded him with marvellous graces, among which may be especially noticed those which he received on Mount Alverno. While, as was his frequent habit, he was here, removed from the world, fasting and praying for forty days, our Lord appeared to him in the form of a Seraph on a cross, and imprinted the five wounds of His own body upon the body of the saint. On this account and because of his burning love for Christ crucified, St. Francis received the surname of the Seraph.

After this the saint lived for two years in many varieties of physical distress and sickness, without murmur or complaint, and with perfect resignation to the will of God. Sometime before his death he made his will, in which he left poverty as an inheritance to his brethren, in which they would find heavenly treasures. As the hour of his dissolution drew near, he had the history of the passion of our Lord read to him, then said the one hundred and forty first psalm and expired at the words: "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name." This on the *4th* of October in the year 1226, in the forty fifth year of his age.

St. Francis founded three orders: the first and proper Franciscan Order; the Order of the Friars Minor; the Order of the Franciscan Nuns, the Clares, so called from their first Prioress St. Clara; and lastly that called the Third Order for the people in the world, of both sexes, who aim at perfection, but do not desire to take the vows of the cloister. This last order, which has been sanctioned by many popes, especially by Gregory IX., Innocent IV., and Nicholas IV., has spread throughout the whole world, and is becoming even in our days more and more flourishing.

LESSON. (*Eccl.* xxxi. 8—11.) Blessed is the man that is found without blemish; and that hath not gone after gold, nor put his trust in money nor in treasures. Who is he, and we will praise him, for he hath done wonderful things in his life. Who hath been tried thereby, and made perfect, he shall have glory everlasting. He that could have transgressed, and hath not transgressed: and could do evil things, and hath not done them. Therefore are his goods established in the Lord, and all the church of the saints shall declare his alms.

[The Gospel as on the Feast of St. Matthias.]

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who by the exemplary virtues of blessed Francis, didst enlarge Thy church by a new offspring: grant we may follow him in despising the things of this world, and be blessed in the perpetual enjoyment of Thy heavenly grace. Thro'.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. WENDELIN.

[October 20.]

T. Wendelin was born of the reigning royal family of Scotland, in the year 554. He was the eldest son and heir to the throne, and was entrusted by his father to a pious bishop for education, whose efforts were blessed by God; for Wendelin became a virtuous youth whose heart belonged entirely to God. By the light of faith he saw, how vain and transitory is everything earthly, and made the deliberate choice of leaving his father's kingdom, to serve God in all humility, seeking to change the royal crown which he held in prospect, for the imperishable crown of heaven, to give an earthly kingdom for a heavenly one; dressed, therefore, as a poor pilgrim, he secretly left his parents and their kingdom, and travelled to Rome, the Capital of the Catholic world, where he presented himself to Pope Benedict I., and made known to him his intentions. The holy father encouraged him to proceed on the road he had taken, following Christ in all humility, and to preserve faithfully in his purpose. Wendelin, then, continued his journey, went across the Alps, through Switzerland and Alsace, and came to Westrich in the Palatinate of the Rhine, as it is called to-day; thence he travelled to Treves, and settled himself in the vicinity of this city in a pleasant valley, near a spring, where he built himself a hut and lived as a hermit,

spending his time in prayer, meditation, and mortification, begging his bread from the inhabitants of the country. After some time he conceived a great desire to make a pilgrimage to Treves and visit its Churches; on the way he begged an alms from the nobleman who owned the land in which the saint lived. This nobleman, taking Wendelin to be a beggar unwilling to work, rebuked him harshly, but Wendelin calmly and tranquilly replied: "My Lord, I have no work." "Then guard my cattle and earn thy bread," replied the nobleman. The saint received the office with pleasure, went to the land of the nobleman, and he, the son of a king, guarded swine. But it was a joy to him to be, for Christ's sake, despised and unknown. But he found before a great while, that the service he had undertaken, left him little time to pray, and he was constrained to ask the nobleman to relieve him from the care of the swine, which request, as his lord had come to love Wendelin on account of his obedience and faithfulness, was granted, and the care of the cows was given him instead. This pleased the saint better, and God so evidently blessed the herd, that the nobleman understood well that he had to thank the prayers of his pious herdsman for it, and therefore honored him highly.

After the saint had guarded the cows for a long time, he asked to have the care of the sheep, which was given to him. He drove the sheep to the neighborhood of Tholey and often near to his old hermitage; as often as the sheep rested, he knelt down and prayed. His heart was always with God, and God blessed his flock, they were preserved from all sickness and increased marvellously, while the nobleman came to like him always more and more. But the more he was favored by his master the more he was hated by the servants, who degraded and slandered him, whenever they could; but Wendelin endured their sneers and derision and their persecutions with heavenly patience, and gave them good for evil. The conduct of his servant did not escape the notice of the master; from day to day he perceived more plainly, that his shepherd was a holy servant of God, and on this account was not willing to let him longer guard his sheep, but wished to give him some rich present and dismiss him. But Wendelin would not accept any other present than the granting of one request: that the nobleman would promise to desist from his present evil way of living, give up his unjust ways, and lead a life acceptable to God; he accompanied this request with such impressive exhortations, that the nobleman became frightened at his sins, and promised to reform his life.

Wendelin, then, put on the dress of a hermit once more, and settled at Wendel's well not far from Tholey, where he could attend divine service. He begged his simple food from door to door, and then shared it with the poor. The people of the neighborhood liked him very much and sought advice, aid, and conso-

lation from him. When at one time a frightful disease appeared among the cattle, the terrefied country people came and implored the saint to help them; Wendelin prayed and the disease disappeared and the sick cattle became well again. Thus his name became well known, and from far and near people came to him with their sick cattle to have him bless and cure them. He prayed, made the sign of the cross, and the disease would leave then. The saint spent seven years thus in praying and doing good, and at the end of that time was called to take the position of Abbot of the Benedictine Monastery at Tholey. Under his government the monastery flourished exceedingly. Ordained a priest by Bishop Gunderich of Treves, Wendelin sought with tireless zeal to feed immortal souls and heal their wounds; the monastery in which he lived, was the refuge of the poor; he was continually employed in making himself and others equal to the saints, and in following Christ in all things.

He was taken sick about the year 617, and feeling his end near, requested the Archbishop Severinus of Treves to come and administer the Sacraments to him. When the saint was about to receive the holy Communion, two angels with a white cloth appeared by his bed, spread the cloth before him, knelt in humble adoration, while he received Communion, and then arose again and returned to heaven. The saint, then, made known his descent and life to the archbishop, begging him to make it known after his death to the brethren of his order, and soon after died calmly in the Lord, on October 20*th*, 617. His sacred remains were buried, as he had requested, in a chapel near his old hermitage, and as God honored his burial place by many miracles, more and more pilgrims constantly visited it, and thus originated the town of St. Wendel, which the Emperor Louis made a city. A very beautiful Church now stands over the grave St. Wendelin, and to this day thousands and thousands of Catholic people venerate his memory and implore his intercession.

Introit: The mouth of the just man shall meditate wisdom and his tongue speak judgment. (*Ps.* xxxvi. 30.) Be not emulous of evil doers, nor envy them that work iniquity. (*Ps.* xxxvi. 1.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. May the intercession, O Lord, of the blessed Abbot St. Wendelin, recommend us to thee: that what we cannot hope for through our own merits, we may obtain by his prayers. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Eccl.* xlv. 1—6.) This saint was beloved of God and men: whose memory is in benediction. He made him like the saints in glory, and magnified him in the fear of his enemies. And with his words he made prodigies to

cease. He glorified him in the sight of kings, and gave him commandments in the sight of his people, and shewed him his glory. He sanctified him in his faith and meekness, and chose him out of all flesh. For he heard him and his voice, and brought him into a cloud. And he gave him commandments before his face, and a law of life and instruction.

EXPLANATION. These beautiful words of praise, given to Moses in the holy Scriptures, apply in many points to St. Wendelin. He, too, was beloved of God, and his memory is held in benediction by men; his name has been truly glorified before kings, for he is now a prince of heaven, exalted above all princes of the earth. On account of his faithfulness in great and small things, and because of the meekness with which he bore all injuries, God sanctified him and raised him from the dust of lowliness to which he willingly sank in his humility.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* xix. 27—29.) At that time: Petrus said to Jesus: Behold, we have left all things, and have followed thee: what therefore shall we have? And Jesus said to them: Amen, I say to you, that you who have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the seat of his majesty, you also shall sit on twelve seats judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall possess life everlasting.

What did Jesus mean by regeneration?

The resurrection of the dead on the Last Day, for then the whole man will be renewed and regenerated, so to speak, body and soul. This renewal or regeneration will be a glorious one for the pious and just, but a fearful one for the wicked.

What is meant by sitting on the twelve thrones and judging the twelve tribes of Israel?

That the apostles and all those Christians who like the apostles have left all for Christ's sake, following the Saviour in poverty, despising and crucifying their flesh, shall take part in the glory of Christ on the Last Day; they will appear in magnificence with Him, and with Him will judge and condemn the wicked.

Does Jesus desire us to leave father and mother?

Christ who commands us to honor our parents, does not wish us to leave our father and mother, or relations in their necessities or to withhold our help, if they need it. He only requires, that

we should not allow ourselves to be prevented by our parents or relations from leading a pious life, and that in case the call to lead a more perfect life should come to us from the Lord, whe should be prepared to leave every thing, even father and mother, the more fervently and impartially to serve Christ, for which we shall be a hundredfold rewarded; for Christ Himself will then take the place of father and mother, and share unto us the richest measure of purest joy both here and in heaven.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. SIMON AND ST. JUDAS THADDEUS, APOSTLES.

[October 28.]

IT is not known, when, where, or in what manner St. Simon, surnamed the Zealot, and by birth a Galilean, was called by Christ to be an apostle. Like the other apostles he became after his call a constant witness of the actions and doctrines, of the humiliation and exaltation of his divine Master, and after the reception of the Holy Ghost he made himself worthy of his surname, by his zeal in preaching the gospel. He preached the gospel in Egypt and other countries of Africa, and finally met the Apostle St. Judas in Persia, where they both received the palm of martyrdom.

St. Judas, son of Mary, who was an aunt to the blessed Virgin, was a near relation of the Saviour, and called, according to the custom of the Jews, His brother; he was surnamed Thaddeus, to distinguish him from Judas Iscariot. Of St. Judas it is also unknown, at what time and in what manner he came to be one of the disciples; in the gospel he is mentioned as the one, who, when our Lord at the Last Supper said, that He would manifest Himself to those who loved Him, asked: "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us and not to the world?" After receiving the Holy Ghost, Judas preached the gospel in Judea and Samaria, then in Syria and Mesopotamia. After meeting with St. Simon in Persia, both were martyred, St. Judas being beheaded with an axe. St. Judas' glowing zeal for the purity of faith is shown in an epistle, which he wrote to the faithful to encourage them to perseverance in faith.

[For the Introit of the Mass see the Feast of St. Andrew.]

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who by Thy blessed Apostles, Simon and Jude, hast taught us to know Thee, grant we may solemnize their eternal glory with true devotion, and by observing their festival, improve in the love of Thee. Thro'.

EPISTLE. (*Ephes.* iv. 7—13.) Brethren: To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the giving of Christ. Wherefore he saith: Ascending on high he led captivity captive: he gave gifts to men. Now that he ascended, what is it, but because he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth. He that descended is the same also that ascended above all the heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors. For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: until we all meet into the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ.

EXPLANATION. St. Paul here instructs us, that graces are given to all men not in the same measure, but distributed according to the wise providence of God. Therefore we should not envy one, who possesses more gifts than we, nor should we be uplifted on account of those he possesses, for God gives to each as many as are useful and necessary for him. The psalmist's word's: Ascending on high, he led captivity captive; he gave gifts to men, mean that Christ, after descending into limbo and redeeming the patriarchs from their captivity, led them, on the day of His ascension, in triumph to heaven, and ten days afterwards bestowed upon the men the gifts of the Holy Ghost. Of these gifts some were ordered to the apostles, who were to preach the gospel everywhere and to found congregations; others to the prophets, who had the gift of prophesying and expounding the Scriptures, subject to the superintendence of the apostles; others to the evangelists, who managed the spiritual affairs of single congregations, for the perfection of the faithful, who are all called to sanctity, for the performance of the service, that is, preaching, celebrating the holy Sacrifice, administering the Sacraments, and edifying the body of Christ, that is, His Church, that we may all obtain unity and perfection in faith and love, and be not any longer like weak, fickle children, but perfect men, and like to Christ.

Let us then give God thanks, that He gives us so many apostolic men for our teachers, who strengthen us in faith, and show us the way to heaven. Let us also pray, that there may some day be one fold and one flock, and that all the faithful will follow Christ on earth, that they may become like to Him in heaven and like to Him in glory.

GOSPEL. (*John* xv. 17—25.) At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: These things I command you, that you love one another. If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own: but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember my word that I said to you: The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you: if they have kept my word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for my name's sake: because they know not him that sent me. If I had not come, and spoken to them, they would not have sin: but now they have no excuse for their sin. He that hateth me, hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no other man hath done, they would not have sin: but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father. But that the word may be fulfilled, which is written in their law: They hated without cause.

INSTRUCTION. I. Since Christ, His apostles and disciples were hated and persecuted by the world, the greatest courage and consolation should be found with those, who have to suffer from this world, because they are not of it, that is, do not wish to go by its false and foolish principles, its vain and vexatious customs, its many mockeries, its contempt and persecutions. Only shame can be reaped from these words by those, who suffer nothing for Christ's sake, who to escape the world's mockery and its hatred would rather keep friendship with it than with Christ, and who will, therefore, not reign with Him in heaven. For as it is considered a great honor for a servant to resemble his lord, so it is considered shameful for him to seek to be greater than his lord. The servant is not greater than his master, says Christ. If then Christ, our Lord, has suffered the hatred and persecution of the world, why should His servants refuse to suffer it also? Can the world's hatred harm us, when God loves us? Does not this very hatred serve to separate us more from the world and unite us more with God? And is it not better to have the world for our enemy than God?

II. Priests can derive great consolation from this, that the servant is not greater than the master, when, notwithstanding all their toil and trouble, they produce no good and receive only the

world's sneers and derision. Did not Christ, the Word made Flesh, endure the same? are you disturbed and distressed, that to you, a weak man, there occurs the same? Besides, our reward consists not in the good accomplished, which does not depend upon us, but in this, that we work for the honor of God and the salvation of souls; the reward will not be withheld, though we gain none or but a single soul for God.

III. Ignorance is not always an excuse for sin; for Christ says, the Jews cannot excuse themselves for not acknowledging, but hating and persecuting Him, because if they had wished, they might have known Him by His works. They are thus to be greatly punished and deserve to be cast away. In the same way the heretics are punishable, and indeed all Catholics who, like the Jews, could easily learn what they have to believe and do, but omit learning it, either through negligence or fear of the world, and thus by their own fault remain in ignorance, committing sin, and thereby causing their condemnation for all eternity. It is different with those who through no fault of theirs, have never heard of Christ and the true faith; for they will not be condemned, because of their ignorance of the faith, for which they are not reprehensible, but on account of the sins which they commit against their conscience and the natural law which is written in every man's heart, the observance of which would result in their being enlightened by God, who would show them the way to the true faith.

IV. Christ says of the Jews, that they hated Him without reason, this is true of all sinners. God so loved men, that He gave His only begotten Son to the death of the cross, and He was not only offered on the cross, but daily offers Himself for them, giving them His blood to drink and His body for their food, and bestowing upon them every moment infinite benefits for body and soul. If after all this they yet commit sin, what is it but hating God without reason?

SUPPLICATION. We earnestly beseech Thee, o most loving Jesus, whose heart burns for us with the purest love, to inflame our cold hearts with that heavenly fire, so that we may love our neighbor like ourselves according to Thy example and precept, and never be beguiled by envy or hatred from this love, while always remembering that we, Thy poor servants, are not greater than Thou, our Lord and God, and therefore not to complain if, like Thee, we are hated and persecuted by the world. Strengthen us by Thy grace, that we may patiently endure all things which Thy divine will sends to us, that we may live and die, after Thy example, in the love of God and our neighbor. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. WOLFGANG, BISHOP.

[October 31.]

T. Wolfgang, the descendant of an illustrious family of Suabia, was educated at the Abbey of Reichenau, near Constance. He here contracted a warm friendship with a young nobleman, named Henry, brother of the Bishop of Würtzburg. Together with Henry he went to Würtzburg in order to enjoy a celebrated teacher; but this teacher, a very proud person, became envious of Wolfgang's rapid progress in science, and in many ways imbittered his life. But Wolfgang who, while studying, had not neglected the practice of the Christian virtues, quietly endured all for Christ's sake, diligently continuing his studies, and finally resolving to leave the world to enter a monastery. When his friend Henry, who in the mean time had become Archbishop of Treves, heard of this decision, he ceased not to implore him to come to him at Treves, which Wolfgang finally did, taking the position of instructor of youth, where by his words and example he made such an impression upon the young people, that the most beautiful fruits of piety were seen in them. The archbishop entrusted to him the education of his young priests, and raised him to the office of Dean of the Cathedral; but even in this favorable position Wolfgang remained poor and humble; whatever he could save, he gave to the poor. In 964 his friend, the Archbishop, died, and Wolfgang no longer allowed anything to detain him from being a monk; he entered the Monastery of Einsiedeln, where his science and especially his solid piety soon became well known.

Having been ordained a priest he went to Hungary, in 972, accompanied by several, who were longing to announce the Gospel of Christ there. Wolfgang was urged to this journey by a vision; St. Othmar appearing to him, he said: "For the love of God thou shalt leave this country, and in an other country thou shalt receive a rich diocese. If thou fulfillest thine office faithfully, thou shalt die in 22 years to enter heaven." When Wolfgang with burning zeal had preached the gospel in Hungary, and had converted five thousand heathens, he came on his return to Passau, where the Bishop Peregrin detained him and recommended him to the Emperor Otto II. for the vacant bishopric of Ratisbon. Wolfgang was elected bishop, but would not accept the episcopal dignity until he had received the express commands of his abbot. Having prepared for his holy office by persistent prayer and rigorous mortification, Wolfgang's first care was to urge the religious and secular clergy to a pious life, and to improve the morals of the people.

He visited the monasteries at Ratisbon and revived their old discipline; the secular clergy followed his noble example, while by his eloquent sermons and his friendly admonitions he won the hearts of the people. On account of his pious life, which was rewarded by God with the gift of miracles, the bishop received honor from all sides; but this very homage of the world saddened the humble man beyond measure. Fearing to fall a prey to pride and thus to offend God, he secretly left Ratisbon and hid himself near it, at Falkenberg, where he built himself a hut and chapel. Here he lived for five years as a hermit, unknown to the world. Meanwhile great distress on account of the bishop's absence prevailed at Ratisbon, and many prayers were said for his return; and the prayers were heard. A hunter one day discovered the holy bishop to the great joy of the people, who so urged his return, that Wolfgang could not resist this request, but went back to Ratisbon and resumed his episcopal duties to the great blessing of the whole diocese.

The wellknown wisdom and sanctity of the Bishop of Ratisbon, caused the Duke of Bavaria, Henry II., to confide to him the education of his children, two princes and two princesses. Wolfgang so well understood how to lead the hearts of these children in the fear of the Lord, that the oldest prince and princess, Henry and Gisela, are venerated as saints, and the others, Bruno and Brigitta, died in the odor of sanctity. The saintly bishop predicted the future position of each of these children, and was accustomed to call Henry king, Bruno bishop, Gisela queen, and Brigitta abbess, and as he said, so it really happened.

But Wolfgang was not satisfied with leading high and low, by practice and precept, to sanctity, he sought to aid his flock in their temporal wants also. The poor found a father in him; he suffered and economized, that he might the better aid those in need. At the time of a great famine, he ordered his steward to give his provisions for a very small price to those who came from the country to procure grain, so that from the provisions which they bought, they were able to support the poor of their neighborhood. The poor of the city he supplied bountifully; his house was open to all. When once a beggar, who had stolen something from his room, was caught, the saint tenderly reproached him, presented him with a new coat, and then released him, for his heart was overflowing with charity; love and meekness lived in it. Some poor were daily at his table; he supported whole families secretly, as it is commanded: Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth.

For twenty one years this servant of God had carried the cross in fervent love, when official business called him to Pechlarn, in Southern Austria; but being attacked by a severe fever on his journey, he was obliged to stop at Pupping, a small village in the

Southern part of Austria. There he felt his end approaching, and had his attendants carry him to the Church of St. Othmar, where, lying on the floor at the foot of the altar, he received the last Sacraments. When the sexton endeavoured to send away the crowd, Wolfgang forbade him, saying, "the people should not be prevented from seeing their bishop die." In ardent devotion to God he poured out his soul, endured his pains with humility and holy joy, and finally with the words: "May the good God have mercy on me, a poor sinner," he expired, on the 31*st* of October, 994.

[The Introit of the Mass, the Epistle and Gospel as on the Feast of St. Nicholas, December 6.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who didst give blessed Wolfgang to Thy people as a minister of eternal salvation: grant we beseech Thee, that he who was the instructor of our life here on earth, may become our intercessor in heaven. Thro'.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ALL SAINTS.

[November 1.]

Why has the Church instituted this festival? O give praise to God in His saints (*Ps.* cl.), and to pay to the saints themselves the honor, which they merited by having made the promotion of the honor of God the work of their whole earthly life. 2. To impress vividly upon our minds, that we are members of that holy Catholic Church which believes in the communion of saints, that is, in the communion of all true Christians, who belong to the Church triumphant in heaven, to the Church suffering in purgatory, or to the Church militant upon earth; but, more particularly, to cause us eamestly to consider the communion of the saints in heaven with us, who are yet battling on earth. 3. To exhort us to raise our eyes and hearts especially to-day to heaven, where before the throne of God is gathered the innumerable multitude of saints of all countries, times, nationalities, and ranks of life, who have faithfully followed Christ and left us glorious examples of virtues, which we ought to imitate. We can imitate them, for the saints too, were weak men they fought and conquered only with the grace of God, which will not be denied to us. 4. To honor those saints, for whom there is no special festival appointed by the Church during the year. 5. Finally, that in answer to so many intercessors God may grant us perfect reconciliation,

may permit us to share in their merits, and may give us grace to enjoy with them, some day, the bliss of heaven.

Who first instituted this festival?

Pope Boniface IV. gave the first suggestion of this festival, when in 610 he ordered, that the Pantheon, a pagan temple at Rome, dedicated to all the gods, should be turned into a Christian Church, and the relics of the saints, dispersed through the different Roman cemeteries, taken up and placed in it. He then dedicated the Church to the honor of the blessed Virgin and of all martyrs, and thus for the first time celebrated the Festival of All Saints, directing that is should be observed in Rome every year. Pope Gregory IV. extended its celebration to the whole Catholic Church, and fixed the day for it on the first of November.

At the Introit the Church sings: Let us all rejoice in the Lord, and celebrate this festival in honour of all the saints, on whose solemnity the angels rejoice and praise the Son of God. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye just: praise becometh the upright. Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. Almighty and eternal God, by whose favour we honour on one solemnity the merits of all Thy saints: grant we may obtain a plentiful blessing of Thy so much desired mercy, since we have so many petitioners in our behalf. Thro'.

LESSON. (*Apoc.* vii. 2—12.) In those days: Behold I, John, saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the sign of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying: Hurt not the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, till we have signed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them that were signed, an hundred forty-four thousand were signed, of every tribe of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Juda, were twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Ruben, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Gad, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Aser, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Nephtali, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Manasses, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Simeon, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Levi, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Issachar, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Zebulon, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Joseph, twelve thousand signed. Of the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand signed. After this I saw a great multitude,

which no man could number, of all nations and tribes, and peoples and tongues: standing before the throne and in sight of the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands and they cried with a loud voice, saying: Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and the ancients, and the four living creatures: and they fell down before the throne upon their faces, and adored God, saying: Amen. Benediction, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, honour, and power, and strength to our God for ever and ever. Amen.

EXPLANATION. The words of this lesson relate and to the general judgment. At this judgment there will be chosen ones from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. But that it might not be thought, that the elect are principally Christian converts from Judaism, St. John was shown a much greater and countless multitude of Christians from heathen lands, by which it is seen, that it is the heathens, who will principally fill the Church of Christ and heaven. This multitude clothed in white and carrying palms in the hands, stands before the throne of God and before the Lamb, that is, Christ. The white robes are tokens of their innocence; the palm is the emblem of their glory and of their victory over the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil. They shall adore God, and forever sing to Him in communion with all the heavenly spirits a canticle of praise for the power and glory, which He has bestowed upon them.

Let us strive so to live, that we may one day be among these chosen ones.

GOSPEL. (*Matt.* v. 1—12.) At that time: Jesus seeing the multitude, went up into a mountain, and when he was set down, his disciples came unto him. And opening his mouth he taught them, saying: Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek: for they shall possess the land. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice: for they shall have their fill. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the clean of heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peace makers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when they

shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you, untruly, for my sake; be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven.

Why is the Gospel of the Eight Beatitudes read on this day?

Because they form, so to speak, a scale of steps, on which the saints courageously ascended to heaven.

If you desire to be with the saints in heaven, you must also mount these steps with patience and perseverance, in doing which God's hand will assuredly aid you.

EXPLANATION OF THF EIGHT BEATITUDES.

I. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven.

They are poor in spirit, who, like the apostles, leave all temporal things for Christ's sake and become poor; they, who have lost their property by misfortune or injustice, and patiently bear this loss with resignation to God's will; they, who are contented with their poor and lowly station in life, do not strive for greater fortune or a higher position, and would rather suffer want than make themselves rich by unlawful means; they, who though rich do not love wealth, nor set their hearts upon it, but use their wealth to aid the poor; and especially they, who are humble, that is, who have no exalted opinion of themselves, but are convinced of their weakness and inward poverty, have a low estimate of themselves and therefore feel always their need, like poor mendicants, to continually implore God's grace and assistance.

II. Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.

He is meek who represses every rising impulse of anger, impatience, and desire of revenge, and willingly puts up with every thing that God, to prove him, decrees or permits to happen to him or men to inflict upon him. He who thus controls himself, is like a calm and tranquil sea, in which the image of the divine sun can be ever reflected, clear and unruffled. He who thus conquers himself, is mightier than though he besieged and conquered strongly fortified cities (*Prov.* xvi. 32.), and will without doubt receive this earth, as well as heaven, as an inheritance, enjoying eternally in heaven the peace (*Ps.* xxxvi. 11.), which is already his on earth.

III. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

The mourners here mentioned, are not those who weep and lament over the death of relatives and friends, or over misfortune or loss of temporal riches, but those who mourn, that God is so often offended, so little loved and honored by men, that so many souls, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, are lost. Among these mourners are also they who lead a strict and penitential life, and patiently endure all distress; for sin is the only evil, the only thing to be lamented, and those tears only, which are shed on account of sin, are useful tears, that are recompensed with everlasting joy and eternal consolation.

IV. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall have their fill.

They hunger and thirst after justice, that is, for those virtues which constitute Christian perfection, who if not already just, try to become so; and if they are so, continue day after day to

advance in piety, striving with all their strength for the perfection of the love of God and their neighbor. He who seeks such perfection with ardent desire and earnest striving, will be filled, that is, will be adorned by God with the most beautiful virtues, and will be abundantly rewarded in heaven.

V. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

They are merciful, who assist the poor according to their means, who, practise every possible spiritual and corporal work of mercy, who as far as they can, patiently endure the faults of others, strive always to excuse them, and willingly forgive the injuries they have received. They especially are truly merciful, who are merciful to their enemy, and do good to him, as written: Love your enemies, and do good to them that persecute you. (*Matt.* v. 44.) Well is it for him who is merciful, the greatest rewards are promised him, but a judgment without mercy shall be given him, who is not merciful.

VI. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God.

They are clean of heart, who carefully preserve the innocence which they received in baptism, and keep their heart and conscience free not only from all sinful words and deeds, but from all sinful thoughts and desires, and in all their omissions and commissions think and desire only good. These while yet on earth see God in all His works and creatures, because their thoughts are directed always to the Highest Good, and in the other world they will see God from face to face, enjoying in this contemplation a peculiar pleasure which is reserved for pure souls only; for as the eye that would see well, must be clear, so those must be immaculate souls, which are to see God.

VII. Blessed are the peace makers, for they shall be called the Children of God.

Those are peace makers who reign over their improper desires, who are careful to have peace in their conscience and all their actions ordered in quiet, who neither quarrel with themselves nor with their neighbors, are submissive to God's will. These are in a spiritual manner called Children of God, because they follow God who is a God of peace (*Rom.* xv. 33.) and who even gave His only Son to reconcile the world, and bring upon earth that peace which the world does not know and cannot give. (*Luke* ii. 14.; *John* xiv. 27.)

VIII. Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice sake, for their is the kingdom of heaven.

Those suffer persecution for justices' sake who by their words, writings, or by their life defend the truth, the faith, and Christian virtues; who cling firmly to God, and permit nothing to turn them

from the duties of the Christian profession, from the practice of their holy religion, but on its account suffer hatred, contempt, disgrace, injury, and injustice from the world. If they endure all this with patience and perseverance, even, like the saints, with joy, then they will become like the saints and like them receive the heavenly crown. If we wish to be crowned with them, we must suffer with them: And all who live piously in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. (ii. *Tim.* iii. 12.)

SUPPLICATION. How lovely, O Lord, are Thy tabernacles! My soul longs for Thy courts. My body and soul rejoice in Thee, Most Loving God, Thou crown and reward of all the saints, whose temporal pains and sufferings Thou dost reward with eternal joy, filling them with good. How blessed are they who have faithfully served Thee, for they carry Thy name on their forehead, and reign with Thee for all eternity. Grant us, we beseech Thee, O God, at their intercession, Thy grace that we after their example may serve Thee in sanctity and justice, in poverty and humility, in meekness and repentance, in the ardent desire for all virtues, by mercy, perfect purity of heart, in peacefulness and patience, following them, and taking part, one day, with them in heavenly joy and happiness. Amen.

[The Instruction on the Veneration of Saints at the beginning of the second part of this book, may be read with profit on this day.]

INSTRUCTION FOR ALL SOULS' DAY.

[November 2.]

What is All Souls' day?

IT is the day set apart by the Catholic Church for the special devout commemoration of those of its members, who have departed this life in the grace and friendship of God, for whom we pray, that they may soon be released by God from the prison of purgatory.

What is purgatory?

Purgatory is that place in which the souls of the deceased faithful, who though dying in the grace of God, are yet burdened with some small sins not yet atoned for, suffer temporal punishment, and become purified from all sin. It is called the place of purification or purgatory, because in it those souls, which are not perfectly unsullied, are purified by fire as gold in the furnace. St. Paul writes to the Corinthians: And the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide

which he had built thereupon, he shall receive a reward; if any man's work burn, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire. (i. *Cor.* iii. 23.) "And when St. Paul," says St. Ambrose (*Serm.* 20. *in Ps.* cxviii.), "says, yet so as by fire, he shows that such a man indeed becomes happy, having suffered the punishment of fire, having been cleansed by the blessed fire, but not being, like the wicked, continually tormented in eternal fire." St. Paul's words, then, can only be understood to refer to the fire of purification, as the infallible Church has always explained them.

Are the heretics right in denying, that there is such a place of purification as purgatory?

By no means, for by such denial they oppose the holy Scriptures, tradition, and reason. The holy Scriptures teach, that there is a purgatory: it is related in the Second Book of the Machabees, that Judas Machabeus sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem, to be used in the temple to obtain prayers for those who fell in battle, for he believed it: a good and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins. But for what dead shall we pray? Those in heaven do not require our prayers; to those in hell they are of no avail; we must then pray for those who are in the place of purification. Christ speaks of a prison in the future life, from which no man comes out until he has paid the last farthing. (*Matt.* v. 25, 26.) This prison cannot be hell, because from hell there is never any release; it must be, then, a place of purification. Again Christ speaks of sin which shall be forgiven neither in this world nor in the next (*Matt.* xii. 32.), from which it follows, there is remittance of some sins in the next world; but this can be neither in heaven nor in hell, consequently in purgatory. As the Consistory of Trent says (*Sess.* 6. *c.* 30.), the Church has always taught, according to the old tradition of the fathers, in all her councils, that there is a purgatory, and all centuries show proofs of the continual belief of all true Christians in a purgatory. Finally, man's unblinded reason must accept a purgatory; for how many depart this earth before having accomplished the great work of their own purification? They cannot enter heaven; for St. John tells us: There shall not enter into it any thing defiled. (*Apoc.* xxi. 27.) The simple separation of the soul from the body does not make the sinful soul pure, and yet God cannot reject them as the hardened sinners in hell; there must then be a middle place, a purgatory, where those who have departed not free from stain, must be purified. See how the doctrine of the Church, reason, and the holy Scriptures all agree, and do not let yourself be led away by false arguments from those who not only believe in no purgatory, but even in no hell, so that they may sin with so much more impunity.

What, how much, and for how long must we suffer in purgatory?

Concerning this the Church has made no decision, though much has been written by the fathers of the Church on the subject. Concerning the severity of the punishment in purgatory, St. Augustine writes: "This fire is more painful than any that man can suffer in this life." This should urge us to continual sanctification and atonement, so that we may escape the fearful judgment of God.

How can we aid the suffering souls in purgatory?

Of this St. Augustine writes: "It is not to be doubted, that we can aid the souls of the departed by the prayers of the Church, by the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and by the alms which we offer for them." The Church has always taught, that prayers for the faithful departed are useful and good, and she has always offered Masses for them.

What should urge us to aid the suffering souls in purgatory?

1. The consideration of the belief of the Church in the communion of saints, by which all the members of the Church upon earth, in heaven, and in purgatory are joined together by the bonds of love, like the members of one body, and as the healthy members of a body sympathize with the suffering members, seeking to aid them, so should we assist our suffering brothers in purgatory. 2. The remembrance that it is God's will, that we should practise charity towards one another, and that fearful judgments are threatened those who show no charity to a brother in need, together with the recollection of God's love which desires, that all men should be happy in heaven. 3. We should be urged to it by love for ourselves, for if we should be condemned to the pains of purification, we would assuredly desire our living brothers to pray for us and perform good works for our sake, while the souls who through our prayers have perhaps found redemption, will not fail to reward our aid by interceding for us.

Can we aid the souls in purgatory by gaining indulgences?

Yes, for as indulgences, as explained in the Instruction for the Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost, are a complete or a partial remittance of the temporal punishment due to sin, bestowed by the Church to penitent sinners from the treasury of the merits of Christ and His saints. If we gain such a remittance, we can apply it to the souls in purgatory. But it is to be remembered, that such an indulgence can be transferred only to one soul.

For which souls should we pray?

We should certainly, especially on this day, offer prayers and good works for all the faithful departed, and since we are more under obligation to some, some are more pleasing to God, some need assistance more, some deserve it more than others, we

should strive to pray most earnestly for our parents, relations, friends, and benefactors; for those who are most acceptable to God; for those who have suffered the longest, or who have the longest yet to suffer; for those who are most painfully tormented; for those who are the most forsaken; for those who are nearest redemption; for those who are suffering on account of us; for those who hope in our prayers; for those who during life have injured us, or been injured by us; for our spiritual brothers and sisters.

When and by which means was this yearly commemoration of the departed introduced into the Church?

The precise time of its introduction cannot be told. Tertullian (A. D. 160) writes, that the early Christians held a yearly commemoration of the faithful departed. Towards the end of the tenth century St. Odilo, Abbot of the Benedictines at Cluny, directed that the yearly commemoration of the faithful departed, should be observed on the Second of November with prayers, alms, and the Sacrifice of the Mass, which time and manner of celebration spread through various dioceses, and was officially confirmed by Pope John XIX. And this day was appointed, that, having the day previously rejoiced at the glory of the saints in heaven, we might on this day most properly pray for those who are yet doing penance for their sins and sigh in purgatory for their redemption.

The Introit of this day's Mass as for all Masses of the deads reads: Grant them eternal rest, O Lord; and let perpetual light shine on them. (*Ps.* lxiv.) A hymn becometh thee O God, in Sion; and a vow shall be paid to thee in Jerusalem. O hear my prayer: all flesh shall come to thee. Grant them, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, give to the souls of Thy servants departed the remission of their sins: that through the help of pious supplications, they may obtain the pardon they have always desired. Who livest.

The Epistle and Gospel of this day speak of the resurrection of all men and of the judgment, when every one accordingly as he has lived, sinful and impenitent, or pure and innocent, will receive an eternally miserable or an eternally happy life. Purgatory will then end and there will be only heaven and hell. It remains with us to choose by our life, which of these two we shall possess.

At the Offertory of the Mass, the priest prays:

Lord Jesus Christ, King of Glory, deliver the souls of all the faithful departed from the flames of hell, and from the deep pit. Deliver them from the lion's mouth, lest hell swallow them, lest

they fall into darkness: and let the standard bearer, St. Michael, bring them into the holy light: which thou promisedst of old to Abraham and his posterity. We offer thee, O Lord, a sacrifice of praise and prayers: accept them in behalf of the souls we commemorate this day: and let them pass from death to life.

℣. From the gates of hell,
℟. Deliver their souls, O Lord.
℣. Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord,
℟. And let perpetual light shine upon them.
℣. May they rest in peace,
℟. Amen.
℣. May the souls of all the faithful departed by the mercy of God rest in peace,
℟. Amen.

[We may profitably and devoutly repeat this versicle as often as we pass a graveyard.]

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. LEONARD, HERMIT AND ABBOT.

[November 6.]

T. Leonard was born in France of noble parents; he was baptized by St. Remigius, Bishop of Rheims; Clovis, the first Christian King of France, was his god-father. Clovis offered him, at the proper age, a position of high honor, but Leonard had set his heart on something higher still. He was ordained a priest by Remigius, and passing through the provinces of the broad lands of France, preached of Christ the Crucified to the people, who for the most part worshipped idols. The miracles which he worked, added such force to his words, that thousands and thousands were converted to the faith. He was one day journeying through a thick forest in which the king and his queen were hunting, when the queen was suddenly taken ill. Help was urgently needed. At this very moment, through God's providence, Leonard came to the place where the queen was, and as soon as he saw the sad circumstances, threw himself on his knees in prayer, while the queen gave birth to a finely formed prince. Highly pleased the king, wished to reward Leonard in a princely manner for his prayers. The saint implored the king to give his gifts as alms to the poor; this the king promised, only insisting that Leonard should, at least, accept the forest as a present. But he would take only that part of it, in which the queen so unexpectedly found help, and where he could built huts for himself and his companions, together with a chapel to be dedicated to the Queen of heaven, Mary. The king soon had one built for him,

and thus was commenced the afterwards famous Monastery of St. Leonard at Noblac.

The miraculous power which God gave to the saint, drew the farmers of the neighborhood around him; they came to obtain help from him in all their necessities and no one ever left his presence unaided and unconsoled. The king granted him at times the favor to release prisoners, for whom Leonard had always the greatest compassion. Thus it often happened, that by the saint's aid poor prisoners found the beloved liberty. Others prayed, that God would help them to be released through the merits of His servant St. Leonard, and suddenly the chains fell from their hands and feet, the doors of the prisons opened of itself, and they were free. Many thus freed brought their bonds and chains to the saint, thanking him. But he surprised, humbled himself before God, and used the opportunity to give them touching admonitions to penance, that they might be also loosed from the bonds of sin. They who were sincerely converted and loved solitude, he received into his monastery.

Living in strict penance and in the continual practice of works in honor of God, Leonard reached an advanced age, and had the happiness of seeing the best fruits ripen from the seed which he had planted. Where idolatry, ignorance, coarseness, and horrible vices had their previously own way, there now reigned the pure law of the gospel. The Monastery of Noblac spread its blessings far around, and many who would have been lost in the world, found in it peace for their souls, and a happy death.

Leonard now weary of live, and longing to see the face of Christ, at last received this grace. God called him to Himself by a quiet death in the year 559.

The Introit of Mass, the Lesson, and the Gospel as on the Feast of St. Wendelin, October 20.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. May the intercession, O Lord, of Thy blessed servant St. Leonard commend us to Thee, that those things which we cannot hope for through our own merits, we may obtain by his prayers. Through.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. MARTIN, BISHOP.

[November 11.]

E who loves God with a filial fear, will continually endeaver to do good. (*Eccl.* xv. 1.) This was the fruitful love of St. Martin, this the summary of his whole life. His life was a continual love of God and his neighbor, and it was therefore replete with good works. He was born in Hungary of pagan parents, but a secret instinct of his soul urged him from childhood to the acknowledgment of the only true God and to the acceptance of the Christian religion. In his tenth year he was placed among the catechumens, that is, those who were preparing to receive the holy Sacrament of Baptism. His pagan father sought to restrain him, but vainly; he had him placed in a company of soldiers, but the fear of God kept him in this position not only free from the excesses common to it, but gave him opportunities to practise the love of his neighbor by distributing his pay among the poor. Once he was met at the gate of the city of Tours by a beggar without clothes, and having nothing else to give him, Martin with his sword cut his own cloak in two, and gave half to the beggar. The following night our Lord appeared to him with this part of the cloak wrapped around him, and said: "With this mantle has Martin, the catechumen, clothed me." Moved by this consoling vision, Martin no longer delayed receiving baptism; he left the army and went to St. Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, and under his direction made wonderful progress in Christian virtue. But however much he labored for his salvation, he did not forget to strive equally for the salvation of others, especially of his parents and relations, for whose conversion he undertook a long and perilous journey back to his native country. Returning from there he built a monastery, in which he and a number of other monks led a very strict and virtuous life. His great faith and his ardent love made him equal in miracles some of the deeds of the apostles; his first miracle was the raising to life of a catechumen, who had died without baptism. The fame of his sanctity and of the miracles, which he wrought, led to his election to the bishopric of Tours, in spite of his determined resistance to the acceptance of the position. This new dignity changed nothing in his manner of life, except that it increased his humility, his zeal for God's honor, and his love for his neighbor. Thus he took charge of his diocese for twenty six years. When over eighty years old, he settled a quarrel which had broken out at Cande, but returning home his strength left him; he called his disciples together, and said: "My children, I am dying!" To which they responded:

"Alas, father, wilt thou leave us? To whom wilt thou leave thy orphans?" Touched by this, the saint prayed: "Lord! If I am still necessary to Thy people, I refuse not the work." But he had toiled enough, his end was approaching; when the priests surrounding him, asked him to change his position in order that he might be easier, he replied: "Let me rather look towards heaven, my brothers, than turn again to earth, that my spirit which is already on its way to the Lord, may not be disturbed from the straight way to Him." He saw Satan near him, and said: "What dost thou here, thou wild beast? Miserable fiend, thou canst not harm me! Abraham's bosom will receive me." With these words he yielded up his spirit, which the angels, singing hymns of praise, carried to heaven.

O that we may learn from St. Martin's life to love God and to care not for our own salvation only, but also for the spiritual and corporal welfare of others, then indeed would we, at the hour of death, have nothing to fear from the temptations of the evil one.

[The Introit as on the Feast of St. Peter's Chair.]

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God who seest, that of our own strength we can do nothing, graciously grant, that by the intercession of Thy holy Bishop and Confessor Martin, we may be protected from all adversities. Through.

LESSON. (*Eccl.* xliv. *and* xlv.) Behold a great priest, who in his time pleased God, and was found just: and in the time of wrath became an atonement. There were none found like him in observing the law of the Most High. Therefore, by an oath, did the Lord make him great amongst his people. He gave him the blessing of all nations, and established his covenant on his head. He acknowledged him in his blessings: he stored up his mercy for him: and he found favour in the eyes of the Lord. He exalted him in the sight of kings: and gave him a crown of glory. He made with him an eternal covenant: and bestowed on him a great priesthood: and rendered him blessed in glory. To perform the priestly office, to sing praises to the name of God; and to offer him precious incense for an odour of sweetness.

EXPLANATION. This lesson, taken from the forty fourth and forty fifth chapters of Ecclesiasticus, speaks of the great men of the Old Testament (Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and Aaron), and the Church applies the description of them to the expression of the dignity, honor, and happiness of the high priest or bishop of the New Law, of whom these men were the prototype. A bishop or priest should strive with all his strength

to imitate those men so acceptable to God, and so anxious for the salvation of man, and as he shares their honor and dignity, he should also like them walk before God in sanctity and justice, seeking in all things to please Him, that He may be reconciled in His anger with the people by the priestly offerings and prayers; for it is not enough for the priest to make the people acquainted with the laws of God, he must practise that, which he preaches. This St. Martin did, and when a priest follows his example, he may expect that God will not only shower blessings abundantly upon him, but upon his people also, and make him great upon earth as well as in heaven.

GOSPEL. (*Luke* xi. 33—36.) At that time: Jesus said to the multitude: No man lighteth a candle and putteth it in a hidden place, nor under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, that they that come in, may see the light. The light of thy body is thy eye. If thy eye be single, thy whole body will be lightsome: but if it be evil, thy body also will be darksome. Take heed therefore, that the light which is in thee, be not darkness. If then thy whole body be lightsome, having no part of darkness, the whole shall be lightsome and as a bright lamp shall lighten thee.

What is the light which is put not in a hidden place put on a candlestick?

Christ Himself who by His doctrine and example, like a light in a high place, lights all who walk in darkness, and whoever follows this light, cannot go wrong. It shines for every man that comes into this world, and if any one does not recognize it, he may blame his own blindness and hardness of heart. Such lights are also teachers, heads of families, parents, and especially the clergy, whom God has placed on a candlestick, so to speak, for the good of those under them. Such persons must strive earnestly to shine for the good of their children and those placed under their care, by giving good instruction, but still more by the example of a pious and edifying life, and not to mislead them, like an ignis fatuus, by scandalous words and actions, into evil. Every Christian should shine, in accordance with his faith, by good works for his fellowmen, that is, he should guide, exhort, and warn them to the right by good example, and not lead them in wrong paths by an indolent, unchristian, and sinful life. Finally, this light represents our conscience, the light which God has signed upon us (*Ps.* iv. 7.), and is kindled within us, that it may shine to us in all our actions and make clear to us what is right and just. We must strive to keep this light ever on its candlestick, that is, be always guided by it, and never darken or extinguish it by carelessly sinning.

What are we to understand by the eye and the body?

By the eye is understood our good intention, or the feelings of the heart directed always to God and His honor, and by the body the works and actions of our life. The simile therefore means: "As a clear, healthy eye controls the body and directs its course, so the mind, turned towards God, guides our conduct and renders it acceptable to God." Be careful, therefore, to have always a single eye, that is, a sincere intention, turned to God's honor, in your thoughts and actions, and not an evil eye, that is, a mind set only upon this world, its vanities and false pleasures.

PRAYER TO ST. MARTIN. O blessed St. Martin, so zealous for God's honor, that neither in word nor deed wouldst thou permit thyself to be overcome, whereat the angels so rejoiced, that they carried thy soul with hymns of praise to the throne of God, I implore thee to obtain for me by thy powerful intercession a compassionate heart for all sufferers, true apostolic zeal for all pastors, and for all on their death-bed the grace to enter, like thee, from this miserable life into the joy of the Lord, which thou as a good and faithful servant, dost already possess. Through.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF MARY.

[November 21.]

What is this festival?

IT is a festival set apart by the Church for the commemoration of the day on which the blessed Virgin Mary, then in her most tender childhood, was offered by her pious parents to the Lord in the temple, and on which Mary consecrated herself forever to God's service.

How did this take place?

The parents of the blessed Virgin had promised, as we learn by tradition, to offer the child which God would give them, to His service in the temple. Mary, at the same time, child as she was, enlightened by divine inspiration had offered herself wholly to the Lord, consecrating herself unreservedly to His love and service. She knew also, that her parents had made a vow to dedicate her to the service of God, for it was an old custom with the Jews to place their daughters in one of the rooms surrounding the temple, there to be well educated by saintly women, as now did Joachim and Anne their holy child. As Mary, though only three years of

age, knew of her parents' vow, she intended, as St. Germanus and Epiphanius testify, to solemnly dedicate herself to God in the temple; she therefore entreated her parents to take her to the temple and fulfil their promise to God, after which, as St. Gregory of Nyssa tells us, St. Anne no longer delayed accompanying her to the temple and offering her to God. Mary, like a graceful dove, hastened on the wings of desire in advance; simple and without external show was her entrance into the temple, but innumerable heavenly spirits celebrated this festival, and the Most High looked down with pleasure upon this purest and holiest sacrifice ever offered in His temple. The three holy persons fell on their faces and adored the living God; the parents in deepest humility, adoration, and reverence offered Him their daughter, and Mary gave thanks to the God of Israel, that He had given her the grace to serve Him, and to give herself to Him to be His handmaid forever. Then Joachim and Anne gave their beloved child to the priest Zacharias (*S. Germ. Greg. de Nicom.*) who presided over the holy service, who, having offered prayers and sacrifices for her, led her to that part of the temple where the maidens dedicated to God's service were educated. Here Mary shone as a model for all the maidens who were with her in the temple, and she shines still for all who, like her, consecrate their virginity to the Lord, and devote themselves wholly and entirely to this service.

[The Introit, Epistle, and Gospel as on the Festival of the Rosary.]

INSTRUCTION. I. How wonderfully noble were the minds of Mary's parents, which enabled them to deprive themselves of their beloved child for the love of God, offering her to Him, the Most High, willingly leaving her in the temple for His holy service! True love of God is ready for any sacrifices, prepared to do whatever He requires.

Parents! God does not require from all of you, that you, like Joachim and Anne, should dedicate your children in a special manner to Him, but He does require of you all, that you see in your children the temple of the Holy Ghost, and that you should guard them from every stain of sin. From their earliest youth you should, if you wish for joy in your children, train them for God' service, changing your dwelling into God's temple by a Christian life.

II. Mary, even in her tenderest childhood, offers up and consecrates herself; she gives herself unreservedly and irrevocably to God. When shall we give ourselves in earnest to God? We are offered to Him in baptism, it is true, and made His consecrated temple; we then renounced the world and the devil; we then bound ourselves to live for God only, and we have, since then,

renewed our baptismal covenant with God. But have we kept to it? Have we not with one hand stolen that, which with the other we offered to God? Have we not profaned with shameful desires the temple of our heart? Have we not lived more for ourselves, for the world, for vanity than for God? When then will we truly give ourselves to God? In our old age perhaps? But will God, after we have spent our youth and strength in the service of the world, sin, and the devil, accept the offering of our weak, feeble body, of our sinbound soul? Will He be satisfied to have us willing to serve Him, when we can no longer serve the world? if we commence to live for God, only when we commence to die? God is a jealous God, He is not satisfied with a heart divided between Him and creatures. He wishes to be loved with the whole heart, with the whole soul, and with all one's strength. And thus He deserves to be loved; it is only such perfect love as this that He can reward, for He wishes to give Himself entirely to us, as we give ourselves entirely to Him, without reserve, for Christ says: If any one love me, my father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him. (*John* xiv. 23.)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who hast pleased that blessed Mary, ever a Virgin, become an abode for the Holy Ghost, should this day be presented to Thee in the temple: grant, by her intercession, that we may be presented before Thy divine Majesty in the temple of God. Thro'.

PRAYER TO MARY. O Mary, most pleasing offering in the sight of God, prepare my heart to be a worthy and acceptable offering to God. Obtain for me, that from henceforth there may arise no thought of my heart, no word of my mouth, no action of mine, which may not tend to my neighbor's good. Obtain for me, that my heart may be at all times turned towards God, and that I may do nothing negligently that concerns God's honor and my own salvation. Take from me my own perverted will, and obtain me a will like thine, that I may satisfactorily perform all my duties, and in everything be obedient to the commands of God. Amen.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE FEAST OF ST. CATHARINE, VIRGIN AND MARTYR.

[November 25.]

Catharine, a noble maiden of Alexandria, labored diligently and energetically, even in her childhood, to learn the Christian religion as well as worldly sciences. In this she was so successful that, in her eighteenth year, she put to shame the erroneous doctrines of the greatest philosophers of Alexandria. The occasion for this was given by the Emperor Maxentius, a cruel persecutor of the Christians. When he learned, that the young and beautiful Catharine upheld the divinity of the Christian religion in the strongest manner, he ordered the wisest philosophers to meet at Alexandria, promising them great rewards, if they would vanquish the maiden in argument, and prevail upon her to become an idolater. But the contrary effect was produced, for Catharine proved with such powerful arguments, that the Christian is the only true religion, the one, only one necessary for eternal life, that the philosophers accepted it without delay, and afterwards defended it with their blood. The emperor, exasperated by this unexpected result of the debate, sought in other ways to move her, using all possible persuasions, offering himself to her in marriage, promising to make her queen of this world if she would renounce her faith; but finding all unavailing he had recourse to threats and tortures. He caused her to be tortured for eleven days in prison by blows, hunger, and thirst, but with no other success than that the empress, his wife, and the general Porphyrius, who visited Catharine in prison, were converted to the faith and prepared to die as martyrs. Still more enraged by this, the emperor commanded, that Catharine should be placed on a wheel of knives and sharp iron hooks, which would tear her body into pieces. But what happened? She made the sign of the cross on the wheel, and instantly the fearful instruments of torture flew apart, and an immense number of spectators were converted by the miracle. The tyrant dared not try new tortures, lest still more should be converted. He therefore ordered, that she should be beheaded. The saint received her death-blow joyously, and her pure soul flew to heaven there to receive the double crown of virginity and martyrdom. Her body was buried by angels on Mount Sinai, where in the eight century it was found by the Christians, and is still venerated with the greatest devotion.

What will be thought, reading this biography, by those young girls who instead of gaining many souls for God by piety and modesty, draw many from Him and lead them to hell by their

reckless conduct, the freedom of their manners, their improper bearing, their shameful dress, and their unblushing exposure?

At the Introit the Church sings: I spoke of thy testimonies before kings, and I was not ashamed: I meditated also on thy commandments, which I loved exceedingly. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. (*Ps.* cxviii.) Glory, &c.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. O God, who gavest the law to Moses on Mount Sinai, and didst wonderfully translate the body of blessed Catharine, Thy virgin and martyr, thither by the ministry of holy angels: mercifully grant, by her merits and prayers, that we may safely come to the mount which is Christ. Who liveth.

LESSON. (*Eccl.* li. 1—8.) I will give glory to thee, O Lord, my king, and I will praise thee, O God, my Saviour. I will give glory to thy name, for thou hast been a helper and protector to me, and hast preserved my body from destruction, from the snare of an unjust tongue, and from the lips of them that forge lies, and in the sight of them that stood by, thou hast been my helper. And thou hast delivered me, according to the multitude of the mercy of thy name, from the roaring lions, that were ready to devour me. Out of the hands of them that sought my life, and from the gates of afflictions, which compassed me about; from the oppression of the flame which surrounded me, and in the midst of the fire I was not burnt. From the depth of the belly of hell, and from an unclean tongue, and from lying words, from an unjust king, and from a slanderous tongue: my soul shall praise the Lord even to death, because thou succourest those that trust in thee, and deliverest them from the hands of the Gentiles, O Lord our God.

APPLICATION. The Church on this day praises God in the words of the wise man, for the graces, which He bestowed on St. Catharine, but especially for the protection of her purity against the temptations and dangers of this world. God is indeed the most faithful defender and the most powerful protector of pure and unsullied souls, and does not permit those who trust in Him, to be confounded. He does indeed sometimes allow them to be assailed by great temptations, dangers, and trials, but this only in order to give them occasion for victory and more conspicuously to manifest His help. For in the midst of their trouble, He is with them, and the greater the danger is the more wonderful is His protection. But this protection cannot be claimed by those, who carelessly, unnecessarily and uselessly rush into the greatest dangers, who intentionally seek occasions for sin, and thrust themselves into the fire of the greatest temptations. For such as these God surely will not renew the miracle of the children in the fiery furnace, but leave them to perish in the danger, which they have loved. (*Eccl.* iii. 27.)

The Gospel as on the Feast of St. Rose of Lima.

What does Christ teach us by this parable?

He teaches us to be at every moment prepared for the judgment which will come after death, when He will take those who are ready with Him to the wedding, that is, to heaven, and will exclude those who are not prepared. Therefore He says at the end: Watch ye and be every moment prepared, because you know not the day nor the hour.

What is to be understood by the wedding and the persons present at it?

By the wedding is understood the eternal possession and enjoyment of God, by the bridegroom Jesus Christ, by the bride the Church on earth, by the wedding feast the union of Christ and His Church in heaven, which is the wedding hall; by the ten virgins all who are invited to the Lamb's wedding and the proud eternal banquet.

Why are the faithful compared to virgins?

Because in the designs of God all the faithful should be as virgins, that is, that they should lead pure and unsullied lives, by the proper use of their senses, by employing the powers of their soul in a right manner, and by avoiding all improper attachments to creatures, a St. Paul says: For I am jealous of you with jealousy of God, for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. (iii. *Cor.* xi. 2.)

What do the lamps, the oil, and the vessels represent?

As the holy fathers explain it, by the lamps faith is understood, by oil love, good works, charity, and by the vessels the hearts and consciences of men.

What is meant by the tarrying of the bridegroom, the virgin's sleep, and the cry by which they were awakened?

The tarrying of the bridegroom represents the uncertainty of death and the judgment; the virgin's sleep the negligence in which Christians continue to live, without good works, until unexpectedly another sleep, the sleep of death, comes over them, from which they are aroused and summoned to judgment by the sound of trumpets and the cry, Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment.

Why did the foolish virgins ask the wise ones for oil?

Because they had not provided themselves with any, that is, because they were contented to have the lamp of faith or of virginity, and did not supply themselves with oil of charity and good works. They will, therefore, be obliged at the judgment to seek from the prudent virgins, that is, from those who combined faith with love, and so supplied themselves with good works, for oil, that is, for a share in their merits. But they obtain nothing, for as St. Jerome says, at the judgment the virtues of the just cannot supply the deficiency of the unjust.

Why did the prudent virgins tell the others to go to them that sell?

In these words, says St. Bernard, a severe rebuke is contained to those hypocrites who all their lives have sought to please men

and buy their praise; let them look to these after death for reward!

Why did the bridegroom say to the foolish virgins: I know you not?

To teach us, that it is not enough in order to enter the kingdom of heaven, that we should believe, but that moreover we must have a living faith, a faith productive of good works, and causing us in all our actions to seek sincerely to promote God's honor. For, as St. Chrysostom says, even the virgins who bring no fruits of good works, will be cast away with those who are not virgins, on the judgment day.

Why does Christ say: Watch?

St. Gregory says, "Were a man to know the time of his death, he could give a part of his life-time to the joys of this world, and a part to penance; but as we know not the hour, we should expect and be ready for the end of our life at any moment."

ASPIRATION. O Lord Jesus Christ, Teacher of eternal life! we thank Thee for having taught us how circumspectly, vigilantly, and with what preparation we should live and expect Thy coming. But as we cannot do this of our own strength, strengthen us with Thy grace, that the fire of Thy love may burn day and night in our hearts, and that we may enter with Thee into the joys of the eternal wedding feast. O do not permit us, at the last judgment, to hear those terrible words from Thy lips: I know you not, but the joyous words: Come, blessed of my Father, and take possession of the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world. O do Thou grant us this grace, Thou who hast bought us at such costly price, and hast redeemed us by Thy blood. To Thee be honor, praise, and thanks forever. Amen.

INSTRUCTION
ON THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

The holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the most important part, indeed the central point of the whole service of the Catholic Church. "What the sun is to the stars," says St. Francis of Sales, "the holy Sacrifice of the Mass is to the other exercises of religion." The Catholic should, therefore, esteem this Sacrifice above all, and by devout participation in it endeavor to draw from it the greatest possible good. With this purpose he should consider: I. The necessity of the holy Sacrifice of the Mass; II. its institution and continuance; III. its substance and its aim; IV. its value and strength; V. its constituent parts and ceremonies; VI. and, finally, the way in which he should attend it.

I. The Necessity of the Mass.

When St. Paul says (*Hebr.* ix. 11, 12.), that Christ being come a high priest of the good things to come, by his own blood entered once into the Holies, having obtained eternal redemption, for the redemption of many transgressions, he means to say, that Christ by His sufferings on the cross of Calvary atoned enough to God for our sins, perfectly cancelled all our debts, and fulfilled and supplied all offerings of the Old Law, which were prototypes of His sacrifice and were to end with it. But it does not follow, that there can be no other sacrifice than the sacrifice on the cross, and none other be necessary in the Christian Church which He founded; for there can be no religion without sacrifice. God is the infinite, highest Lord, and all rational creatures, the works of His hands, owe Him the greatest reverence, adoration, and self-sacrifice; He is infinitely good to us, and we own Him the greatest gratitude; He is infinite purity and holiness, we stand in His presence sinners, stained with sin. We do indeed show Him our reverence, our thanks, our sorrow by prayers and by loving, contrite hearts, but we have within us the urgent need of expressing the feelings of our heart externally also, by gifts and presents of the most precious, most valuable, and dearest of our possessions, which we offer and consecrate to God. This presentation of anything entirely dedicated to God,—usually something killed and consumed in order to show that the Lord, our God, is above us and all our goods, and is Lord of life and death—we call an offering, and such offerings are as old as the world. At all times and in all places men have felt and owned, that prayer alone is not

sufficient, that they need, to be permitted to appear before God in their sinfulness and needs, to have a support to their prayers; and they, therefore, add an external gift, a present to supply their own weakness and unworthiness, and we find among the rudest people sometimes bloody, sometimes unbloody offerings. Should not the Christian religion, then, bring an offering by which Christian people can show the homage due to God? But the sacrifices of the Old Law are abolished by the sacrifice of the cross, and Christ Himself has announced, that the blood of slaughtered animals is not pleasing to Him (*Hebr.* x. 5—7.), and that He will accept no other offering than a sacrifice worthy of His majesty, and that this pure sacrifice, worthy of His majesty, must in future be offered to Him in every place upon the earth. (*Mal.* i. 10, 11.) But what sacrifice worthy of God, can the Christian offer, if not Christ, our Saviour and our Head, with whom God has given us everything, and made us by and in Christ members of His body? And that this might be done, "Christ, at the Last Supper, the night when He was delivered up, in order to leave to His beloved bride, the Church, in accordance with the needs of human nature, a visible sacrifice by means of which the bloody sacrifice, which had to be offered up on the cross, might be always present, His own remembrance remain until the end of time, and we use its powerful strength for the forgiveness of sin, as we daily need to do, declared Himself the Eternal High Priest according to the Order of Melchisedech, and offered His body in the form of bread and wine to God the Father, and under the same appearance He gave it as food to His apostles, whom He at that time constituted priests of the New Testament, commanding them and their successors to offer the same in their priesthood." (*Conc. Trid. Sess.* 22. *cap.* 1. 2. 3.)

The necessity of a continuing sacrifice in the Christian Church, is further manifested by this: that the sacrifice of the cross, which Christ perfectly accomplished in relation to Himself, must also be accomplished in relation to us, that is, appropriated to us. To understand this, we must remember that the victims in the Old Law were slaughtered, burnt, and a part eaten by the priests and the people, in order, so to speak, that by and through this offering they might become one with God. The sacrifices of the Old Testament were prototypes of the New, and the faithful should now take part in the sacrifice of Christ, and thus pass to union with God; but this can be done only by uniting in the sacrifice. As Christ who offered Himself on the cross, cannot now be united with us, the Saviour instituted the holy Sacrifice of the New Testament, in which He gives Himself under the form of bread and wine to all His members for food, unites them with Himself and His Heavenly Father, and bestows upon them all His merits, all fruits of His death upon the cross, the price of the blood, which he shed. Thus St. Augustine

writes: "The one and the same sacrifice is offered on our altars and on Mount Calvary, with this difference only: on Mount Calvary it was offered simply, on our altars it is offered and distributed." And St. Ambrose adds: "On the altar the offering of the cross is accomplished, for Christ there daily nourishes us with the Sacrament of His sufferings. In this way Christ, by the sacrifice of the cross, paid our ransom, and by the sacrifice of the altar distributes to us the fruits of that payment."

Christ is the Eternal High Priest. (*Ps.* cix. 4.; *Hebr.* v. 10., vi. 19.) He has commenced and accomplished the sacrifice of the cross, but not ended it, it shall continue as an offering which is accomplished, for all times. Therefore Christ was the sacrifice not only while He hung upon the cross, but He remains for all times the sacrifice for this sinful world and offers it at all times as Eternal High Priest. How, if His offering was not continuous, could the prophets call Him a Priest according to the Order of the King of Priests, Melchisedech, who offered bread and wine, prototypes of the holy Sacrifice of the Mass? All persons born into the world, should have part in it, should participate in its merits, not by faith only, but by receiving in themselves the body and blood of Christ, the only true, perfect sacrifice of heaven and of earth.

Without the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the point of union of a common external divine service would be lacking in the Christian Church, by which to renew the remembrance of the offering of the cross and venerate it as it ought to be. At the sacrifice of the cross, there was present no one except Mary, John, and some pious women, who understood the sufferings and bloody death of Christ, to unite with Him and give due honor to this most holy sacrifice; the others who surrounded the cross, joined in insulting, degrading and outraging this offering. This sacrifice was indeed accomplished by the aid of men, but of men who aided only by their crimes. There was no one there, except Mary, who would have made the cross the altar on which Christ offered Himself, no congregation was there to take part in the sacrifice of the altar. It became necessary then, that this offering should at some future time receive the homage due to it, and that those for whose salvation the offering was made, should have the opportunity to unite in offering it, and thus to celebrate in common a divine service worthy of Divine Majesty. And this is done in the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, where the faithful are invited to venerate that bloody sacrifice of the cross, being urged to gratitude for it, and being invited to participation in it, by means of holy Communion. If this were not so, there would be no external visible service in the Christian Church, and there could be no true divine service; that which should be divine worship, would be only school lessons; the Church in which Christ ought to be solemnly ador-

ed, would be only a lecture-room; there would be no mention of an altar there, no true communion of Christ and the faithful, and of the faithful among themselves; the means of participating in the fruits of the sacrifice of the cross, of offering and uniting ourselves with Christ, would be lacking. How true this is, we see from the condition of the heretics, who deny the continuance of Christ's sacrifice in His Church, the Sacrifice of the Mass. Their service is but a sermon, their Churches assembly-rooms, the altar left standing is but a continual reminder of their inconsistency, because that is no altar on which there is no offering; their ministers of religion have ceased to be priests, for as we cannot think of an altar without an offering, so also of no priest without sacrifice.

In the holy Sacrifice of the Mass must be fulfilled all the prototypes and prophecies in regard to Christ's offering, which were ordered by God in the Old Testament, or were spoken by the inspired prophets.

A true and unquestionable prototype of the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, was the Offering of Melchisedech. This king of peace and justice, this high priest who had neither predecessor nor successor in his priesthood, who offered bread and wine, and then administered it to Abraham and his servants (*Gen.* xiv. 8.), was a special prototype of Christ who offered Himself to His Heavenly Father under the form of bread and wine as the fountain of all peace and justice, and gave Himself to His apostles.

Another prototype of the Sacrifice of the Mass was in the show-breads (*Lev.* xxiv. 5-9.) which were baked from fine flour, kept continually before the Lord in the sanctuary as a sacrifice, and at the end of eight days were eaten by the priests.

Another was in the offering of bread and wine, which was united with the sacrifice of slaughtered animals. Thus there was always an unbloody offering, of bread and wine, united with a bloody offering, representing the united offering of the bloody Sacrifice of the Cross and the unbloody Sacrifice of the Mass.

To the offerings of the Old Testament belonged oil and incense. The oil referred to Christ, the Anointed One, who offers Himself in the holy Sacrifice of Mass, being at the same time our High Priest, symbolized by the incense.

In regard to the prophecies, we have the holy Sacrifice of the Mass plainly announced by the prophet Malachias (*Mal.* i. 10, 11.), when God turning to the Jewish people, says: I have no pleasure in you, and I will not receive a gift of your hand. For from the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation: for my name is great among the gentiles. In this prophecy is clearly announced, first,

that the sacrifices in use among the Jews, will cease; secondly, that in their place will be offered a clean oblation; thirdly, by all nations and in all places from the rising to the setting of the sun. By this oblation the sacrifice of the cross cannot be meant, for this was offered only once and at only one place, at Jerusalem; nor can it mean the inward offering of love, as asserted by the heretics who reject the Mass, because the sacrifice of love is no new sacrifice, it was offered by the saints of the Old Testament also, and it is not entirely pure, for human failings were contained in it; nor yet is it the offering of prayer and praise, for this prophecy does not speak of a sacrifice of sweet odor, by which the offering of prayer and praise might well be understood, but of an external, material thing, an oblation; consequently we must understand by it the clean oblation of the New Testament, the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, which never becomes unclean, even though the priest who offers, or the congregation present at it, be as impure as ever. For these reasons the Council of Trent (*Sess.* 22. *c.* 1.) declares, "that this prophecy of Malachias obtains its fulfilment in the holy Sacrifice of the Mass;" and the fathers of the Church have understand it in the same manner.

II. On the Institution and Continual Celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in the Catholic Church.

All that the sacrifices of the Old Testament so plainly represented and the sacred prophecies so clearly announced, Christ fulfilled on the day before His passion. In that great last hour, which He had awaited with such longing, that He might accomplish the work of redemption and consummate His offering, He gathered His disciples around Him. The solemnity of His whole mien, the pathos in His countenance and in His voice, drew their attention and made them feel, that He intended something grand. The paschal lamb was eaten, the feet of the disciples were washed, they were gathered at the table, around the Saviour, full of expectation. Then, says the gospel, he took bread, blessed it, gave thanks, and said: This is my body which is given for you; in like manner the chalice also, saying: This is the chalice of the New Testament in my blood. (*Luke* xxii. 19, 20.; *Matt.* xxvi.) Here then Christ as High Priest according to the Order of Melchisedech, offers Himself: This is my body which is given for you, this is my blood which shall be shed for many for the remission of sin. If then the body and blood of Christ in the blessed Sacrament is the same body and blood as that offered and shed upon the cross, then it is certainly a sacrifice of body and blood, and as Christ wished this sacrifice to continue in His Church, He added: Do this in commemoration of me, which was giving authority and command to His apostles and their successors, to do that which He had done. These travelled and offered also, breaking bread

which the world's salvation is bound." "The earth," adds St. Timothy of Jerusalem," is under obligations to the Mass for its preservation; but for the Mass, the sins of men would long ago have annihilated it." "The Sacrifice of the Altar," says St. Thomas, "is as effectual as the offering on Mount Calvary." "A Mass," says St. Chrysostom, "is of as much value as the offering on Calvary." Like that offering, the Mass has in itself power enough to satisfy God's justice, always to effect our reconciliation with Him, and make us participators in grace for forgiveness of sins; for He who offers the sacrifice, is the same who is offered, He is the Son of God, equal to His Father; He is one with those for whom He offers the sacrifice, for He is man like to us in all but sin; He is Himself both High Priest and Victim, of whom St. John says: He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. (i. *John* ii. 2.) From this it follows:

1) That the sacrifice does not lose its efficacy, even though offered by a bad priest, for Christ is not only the victim but the Priest and High Priest who offers it; as an alms loses none of its power and worth, even though dispensed by a bad servant;

2) that the efficacy of the Mass extends to all men, that it can be offered and is offered for both the living and the dead, when they belong to the communion of the Catholic Church, for the conversion of sinners, heretics, and idolaters, and for obtaining corporal and spiritual help. Concerning sacrifice for the departed, Mass for the dead, Tertullian († A. D. 220) writes, "that prayer for the dead is a very old custom, confirmed by tradition;" and St. Chrysostom adds: "The apostle did not say without meaning, that when celebrating the mysteries, he thought of those who had passed away from us." The fruits of the Sacrifice of the Mass are bestowed upon the souls in purgatory as intercession for them, that their sufferings may be lessened, and they released from them;

3) that the faithful should pray zealously, especially at the celebration of the holy Sacrifice. Then they will be easier heard, for Christ, the head of the living members of the Church which is His body, here offers Himself as our only mediator, and prays for graces for us. Shall the prayers of the faithful, united with the prayers of Jesus, fail to reach the throne and be heard? Therefore it is, that pious Christians love most of all to present their petitions, homage, and thanks to God at Mass, and while praying Him, that He will accept them for the sake of Christ, their Redeemer and their Head, they perform that which we call attending or hearing Mass;

4) that it is permissable and very profitable to pray at Mass for our fellowmen, since Christ especially requires, that we should intercede for one another, and it is certainly pleasing to Him if

we commend to Him there, where He is offered on our altars in purest love for all, our parents, friends, those who are sick, in distress or in affliction, so that they may find help and consolation;

5) that if the Mass is offered in honor of the blessed Virgin or any of the saint, this is not to be understood to mean, that the Mass is offered to them, but merely, as the Church teaches, that it is offered in commemoration of their victory over themselves and the world, and is simply a Mass of thanksgiving for the graces which God bestowed upon them and the glory which He has imparted to them; and a Rogatory Mass by which we beseech the saints, the glorified members of Christ's body, to intercede for us thatwe may work out our salvation. Thus St. Augustine says: "We do not raise our altars to martyrs, but to God Himself, though on the graves of martyrs. No one of our predecessors has ever said: We offer to thee, O Peter or Paul. Whatever is offered, is offered to God who crowns the saints." Finally,

6) that it is a superstitious belief to ascribe to some Masses, to those of the Heavenly Court or the Gregorian, &c., greater efficacy than to others. For in every Mass there is the same Victim and the same Priest, Jesus Christ, eternally blessed.

V. The Constituent Parts and Ceremonies of the Mass.

The holy Sacrifice of the Mass is in its nature ever the same, whether celebrated with singing and many assistants on the altar (high Mass, grand high Mass), or quietly without singing and with only one or two assistants (low Mass), whether some of the faithful receive holy Communion or not, as the Consistory of Trent expressly declares. (*Sess.* 22. *c.* 6.)

The name Mass was given to the holy Sacrifice in the beginning of Christianity and means dismissal; in the early Christian times the people were formally dismissed by the deacon, hence the name. There were properly two dismissals by the deacon: the first after the gospel and sermon, and was addressed to the Catechumens and the public penitents who were obliged to leave the Church before the Offertory; the second was at the end of the sacrifice, when the deacon dismissed all with the words: Ite Missa est, "Go, Mass is ended;" this latter dismissal is still in use.

The Sacrifice of the Mass consists of three principal parts: the Offertory, the Consecration, and the Communion or the reception of the body and blood of Christ, besides which there is the before and after Mass.

The Church has surrounded the celebration of the holy Sacrifice of the Mass with various ceremonies, in accordance with its dignity and efficacy, which are divided into the ceremonies of the altar, of the priestly dress, and of the manner of offering the sacrifice.

I. The altar, at the time of the persecutions of the Christians a four-cornered table of wood, afterwards of stone, represents Mount Calvary where Christ was crucified, the cross upon which He consummated His bloody sacrifice, and especially Christ Himself who, as the apostle expresses it (*Matt.* xxi. 42.; *Eph.* ii. 21, 22.), is the head-corner-stone of the Church, the one who offers, the sacrifice, and the altar. The altar-cloth which covers the altar, represents the linen cloth in which Christ' body was wrapped.

II. The priestly vestments consist of several articles:

1. The veil or amict, which served originally to cover the neck which the dress of the times left uncovered, and should remind the priest and the faithful of the Son of God who, when He came down from heaven, veiled His divinity under His humility; of the contest which the priest has always to sustain against the temptations of the evil one, wherefore he prays when, putting it on: "O Lord, place upon my head the helmet of salvation for protection against the temptations of the devil;" and of the cloth with which the Saviour was blindfolded, when the soldiers mocked Him.

2. The alb, a long, white robe, which reminds us by its whiteness of interior purity, by its length of the perseverance in good works with which the priest should be clothed; of that white robe in which the faithful servants in heaven, who followed the Lamb, are arrayed, as seen by St. John, whence the prayer: "Purify my heart, O Lord, and make me wholly pure, that I may be washed clean in the blood of the Lamb and receive eternal happiness;" and of that garment, which, in mockery, was put upon Christ at the command of Herod.

3. The cincture or girdle, used to keep the robe in place, reminds the priest, that in celebrating the holy Sacrifice he must throw away the last vestige of sensual and worldly life, on which account he says: "Gird me, O Lord, with the girdle of purity, and extinguish in me every attraction to improper desires;" it also recalls to our remembrance the ropes with which Christ was bound.

4. The maniple which the priest wears on his left arm, was originally a little handkerchief serving to free the face from perspiration; it still reminds the priest, that he can enter heaven only by evangelical labors, sweat, and tears, hence the prayer: "Make me worthy, O Lord, to carry the band of pain and tears, that I may reap their harvest in joy." It also represents the handkerchief with which our Lord dried His blood-stained face.

5. The stole is the symbol of the priestly power and dignity, reminding the wearer, in the first place, of the spiritual vesture of justice and innocence, lost by original sin, but regained by Christ's death. The priest, therefore, prays when putting it on: "Give me once more the vesture of immortality which we lost by

the sin of the first man;" and secondly, of the chains which Christ carried in order to break the chains of the first sin.

6. The chasuble, formely made like a round cloak without opening at the sides, represents the sacred love with which the priest, like His divine master, should embrace all mankind and shelter them as in the folds of a cloak; the yoke of Christ, that is His doctrine, which he should bear all through life, wherefore he prays: "O Lord, who hast said: My yoke is sweet and my burden light, grant that I may so bear them as to obtain Thy grace." It also represents the cross carried by Christ, which the priest by mortification of the flesh should bear in His footsteeps.

7. The beretta which the priest wears on his head, reminds him of the recollection with which he should offer the holy sacrifice, and of the crown of thorns with which his Lord and Master was crowned.

The color of the vestments varies according to the occasion upon which they are used. White is worn in token of joy and praise on festivals of our Lord, of the blessed Virgin, and of confessors, and represents the innocence and purity of our Lord, His Mother, and the saints. Red is worn at Pentecost and on the festivals of martyrs, and is a sign of the fire of love which the Holy Ghost kindles in hearts upon earth. Violet, which shows the necessity of a penitential life, is used on days of penance in Lent and Advent. Green, the emblem of the hope and happiness, which Christ has obtained for us, is worn on Sundays upon which no particular festival is celebrated. Black, the token of death and sorrow, is used at proper Masses for the dead.

III. The manner of offering the holy Sacrifice, is included in the ceremonies which the Church, according to tradition and ancient direction, has ordered for the celebration of the holy mysteries; for, as the Consistory of Trent says (*Sess.* 22. *c.* 5.), "the nature of man requires external signs by which to elevate the spirit to the contemplation of the divine mysteries, and to increase the majesty of the manner of offering."

As has been already said, the Mass consists of three principal parts, exclusive of the introduction or preparation for Mass which consists of the part from the beginning to the Offertory, and the After-Mass or thanksgiving, consisting of the portion from the end of the Communion to the Last Gospel.

THE INTRODUCTION TO THE MASS,

or the more remote preparation for the holy Sacrifice itself, comprises the prayers on the altar-steps and the Introit.

The prayers on the steps are so called, because the priest at the foot of the altar makes the sign of the cross, says the psalm Judica, some short verses, and makes a general confession of sin, by which he confess himself with the faithful unworthy to ascend the altar, until he and they have first asked forgiveness

of sin. The priest then and often afterwards makes the sign of the cross, and at the Dominus vobiscum, "The Lord be with you" raises his hands to heaven, because he expects all salvation from Christ, the Crucified, who now sits at the right hand of His Father. At the conclusion of the prayers at the foot of the altar, the priest ascends the altar-steps, praying that God will take from him and the people all their sins; he then reverently kisses the part of the altar in which the relics of the saints are kept, in reverence for Christ whom the altar represents, and for the saints whose relics are enclosed within it. The kissing of the altar, which occurs often during Mass, is the expression of the priest's desire to become united with Christ, as the Head, and with the saints, as members of the Christian communion. The priest now goes to the right of the altar and says the Introit, which is usually a passage from the psalms or from the prophets, appropriate to the day, and closes with the Gloria Patri, or "Glory be to the Father."

The priest then goes to the middle of the altar, and in alternation with his assistants says nine times the Kyrie eleison, or "Lord, have mercy on us," three times invoking for mercy each of the Three Divine Persons of the Blessed Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; this prayer may be called a continuation of the prayers at the foot of the altar. This is followed by the Gloria, that hymn of praise which commences with the words sung by the angels at Christ's birth, to which the Church has made some additions. This hymn follows immediately upon the Kyrie eleison, because the Church intends that the faithful shall be encouraged to trust, that the cry for mercy has not been in vain, for Christ is appearing, at whose birth the angels sung: Glory be to God and peace to men!

The priest then turns to the people with the words Dominus vobiscum, then turning back says the Oration or Collect, that is, a collected prayer, because in it the prayers and wishes of all the faithful are gathered in one and delivered to God. The collect is different in almost every Mass, but always contains a petition for spiritual benefits.

After this prayer or oration follows the Lesson or Epistle, which is generally from the Epistles of the apostles; at the end of this the clerk responds Deo gratias, "Thanks be to God" (for having so beautifully and advantageously taught us by the apostles and prophets).

Next come the Gradual, the Alleluia, the Tract, and the Sequence. The Gradual, or the singing at the altar-steps, so called because in early times it was sung by a lector on the steps of a desk, on which the Epistle was read, consists of some verses from the psalms. The Alleluia, "Praise to God," is a song of joy, omitted in Lent. In its place during penitential seasons the Tract, a grave, earnest song, also from the psalms, is sung to a mourn-

ful air. The Sequences are hymns of the Church, which are used on certain occasions, as Easter, Pentecost, Corpus Christi, and in Masses for the dead.

The priest next repeats at the mittle of the altar the short prayer: Munda cor meum, "Cleanse my heart," in which he entreats God to grant him the grace to properly announce the gospel which he then proceeds to read or to sing, beginning with the words: Sequentia sancti Evangelii, "The continuation of the holy gospel according to....", to which the assistant replies, Gloria tibi Domine, "Glory be to Thee, O Lord," and at the conclusion, Laus tibi Christe, "Praise be to Thee, O Christ." After reading the gospel, the priest kisses the book in reverence for the word of God, and says: "May our sins be blotted out by the words of the gospel." *)

The Gospel is followed by the Credo, "I believe," which is the creed established by the fathers of the Council of Nice in the year 323, in contradiction to the Arian heresy which denied Christ's divinity, and has since been said on all Sundays, festivals of the Lord, of the blessed Virgin, of the apostles and fathers of the Church.

With the creed ends the preparation for Mass, and the first of the principal parts of the Mass begins:

THE OFFERTORY OR OFFERING OF THE SACRIFICE.

The priest now takes the bread and wine, which in early times was brought by the people to the Church and laid on the altar, but is now previously prepared, and offers it to God, supplicating Him to accept this gift or offering and let it be acceptable in His sight. The priest then washes his hands as a sign of that perfect purification which is necessary for the offering of the most holy Sacrifice, and having at the middle of the altar said a short prayer to the Most Holy Trinity, turns to the people, asks them in these words to join with him in prayer: Orate fratres, "Brethren, pray." The assistants answer in the name of the people with a prayer, that God may accept this offering from his hands, the priest responds Amen and repeats the Secreta, the prayers asking for spiritual grace, which are said in a low, subduced voice; the Secreta is followed by the Preface, that is, the Introit or Introduction to the proper Mass, the Canon.

THE CANON.

With the preface commences the second principal part of the Mass, which is ended with the Consecration, and is called the Canon or rule, because it aids in the worthy celebration and accomplishment of the holy Sacrifice, and is for the priest an un-

*) For Explanation of the Sign of the Cross which the priest makes before and after the gospel, see Instruction for the "Finding of the holy Cross".

alterable law. The Canon consists of prayers said before and after the Consecration, and at the Consecration itself, until Pater noster when the Canon ends, in a low voice from reverence towards the most holy Sacrifice. Before the Consecration the priest standing at the middle of the altar, raises his eyes and hands to heaven in acknowledgment of being now on the point of advancing nearer to the throne of the Almighty. Conscious of his unworthiness he then rests his folded hands on the altar, bows down his head, and prays with down cast eyes, standing like Moses between God and the people, to the Heavenly Father, beseeching Him graciously to accept and receive these offered gifts, which are appointed for this holy, unspotted Sacrifice, and graciously to remember the pope, the bishop, the whole Church, and all who are present at the sacrifice; for which graces the priest implores the saints to intercede with him, and once more makes the often repeated petition, that God may bless the offering and make it acceptable in His sight. Then placing his hands over the chalice and the host, in sign that he lays his own and the people's sins upon the Sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, the priest commences

THE CONSECRATION,

in which he repeats, not in his own name but in the name of Jesus, in deepest reverence and humility the mysterious words of Consecration of the bread and wine, which are changed by these words, in a wonderful and mysterious manner, into the real body and blood of Jesus. As soon as this is done, the priest raises for adoration the holy consecrated Host and the sacred Blood in the chalice. After the Elevation the priest prays God, graciously to accept the changed gifts, the Sacrifice of the New Testament, as He was graciously pleased to accept the first gifts of Abel and the typical sacrifices of Abraham and Melchisedech; then makes a Memento for the Dead, and next remembering himself and all unworthy sinners, strikes his breast, beseeching God to permit him and all the faithful to participate in the glory of the chosen ones, through Jesus Christ by whom alone is given all true life and salvation.

With this ends the Canon, which is followed by the prayers which are said in the third part of the mass or

THE COMMUNION.

The priest says aloud the Lord's prayer, adding to the petition "Deliver us from evil", the supplication that God would deliver him and all the people from all evil past, present, and to come, and give true peace in our days by the intercession of the saints; he breaks the Host in commemoration of the breaking of bread at the Last Supper, and in recollection of the violent death of the Saviour, and lets a small portion of it drop into the

chalice, because though the bread and wine were separately changed, each is as much as the other the whole and undivided God-Man, Jesus Christ.

The priest then bows down before Christ, the true paschal Lamb, and striking his breast three times in acknowledgment of his sinfulness, he says three times the Agnus Dei, "Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;" the last time instead of "have mercy on us", "grant us peace." With bowed head he then asks for peace for the whole Church, for the grace worthily to receive Christ, our Lord, says three times Domine, non sum dignus, "Lord, I am not worthy, that thou shouldst enter under my roof," receives the body and blood of Christ, and administers holy Communion to the faithful who wish to receive it.

THE AFTER-MASS

from the Communion to the Last Gospel, consists of several prayers and thanksgiving, the Ite Missa est, the last blessing, and the Gospel of St. John: In the beginning was the word.

VI. Manner of Hearing the Holy Sacrifice of Mass.

In order to hear Mass profitably in the sense and spirit of the Church, we should know, in the first place, that the Mass is that sacrifice, which we should offer with our whole being, with all that we are or have, to God the Almighty for His glory, in satisfaction for our sins, in thanksgiving for graces received and in supplication for those still necessary, a sacrifice which we ourselves, because of our wretched sinfulness, cannot offer and therefore Christ Himself offers for us; we should be united with God by the most intimate participation in the Sacrifice of Jesus, and we should understand, that the Sacrifice of the Mass is also a representation of the sufferings and death of Christ. Thus we must hear Mass in a threefold manner.

First, by remembering at the beginning of Mass, that we ourselves should be the offering of reconciliation to God's justice, but that Jesus, the Son of God, out of infinite love, gave Himself to us as an offering by which we could become reconciled with His Father, incline Him to us, perfectly glorify and thank Him; and though the priest stands alone on the altar, alone speaking, and with his hands offers the sacrifice, we must unite ourselves with him and offer the sacrifice with him. The first way of hearing Mass is to perform the sacrifice with the priest, doing as far as we can, in spirit, that which he does, remembering that we have met together not only to hear Mass, but at the same time to perform and offer the sacrifice with the priest.

To do this, we should humble ourselves with the priest at the foot of the altar, as poor sinners before God, imploring mercy; at the Gloria praise God with the priest, at the Epistle and

Gospel thank God for His sacred word, resolving to live faithfully in accordance with it; at the Credo make a profession of faith with heart and lips, earnestly promising to live and die in the holy Catholic Church; at the Offertory offer our heart with all its desires and inclinations, a sacrifice to God; at the Sanctus praise God with all the angels and saints. Before the Elevation we should be sincerely sorry for our sins, consider that we are unworthy to appear in the sight of God, remember that we must make satisfaction for our sins, and at the Memento for the living, make a memento with the priest. We can here follow St. Francis Borgia, who vividly represented to himself, during the holy Sacrifice, the bloody Sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and meditated in his memento upon the five wounds of Jesus. At the thought of the wound of the right hand, he commended to God the pope, bishops, and priests; at the wound of the left hand, officers of justice, and heads of the civil power; at the wound of the right foot, all spiritual orders; at the left, all relations, friends, benefactors, and all who had commended themselves to his prayers. The wound in the side he reserved for himself, in this he entered and hid himself with all his wishes and anxieties. He made the memento for the dead in the same way, commending his departed friends, benefactors and all for whom he intended to pray, and all forsaken souls, through the wounds of Jesus, offering them with Him to God. At the Elevation, we should with the priest, in deepest reverence, adore Jesus, offering Him, the true Lamb of Sacrifice, to God the Father, for His glory, in thanksgiving for graces received, in satisfaction for our sins and for the sins of the whole world, for help in our needs and our weakness, and in supplication for new graces, offering ourselves also entirely for the same objects. After the Elevation, we should adore the Saviour present on the altar, thank Him for His gracious condescension, arousing in ourselves the ardent desire for a sincere union with Him and through Him with His Heavenly Father. And herein consists

the Second Form of Devotion at Mass, belonging to the third principal part, reaching from the Pater noster to the end, which includes the priest's reception of the holy Communion. For the Church desires that the faithful should unite themselves at every Mass with Jesus by Communion, and through Him with His Heavenly Father, becoming one with Him, which is the great end of the Sacrifice of Jesus. But as actual Communion at every Mass is not possible, we should receive Communion spiritually, that is, inflame in ourselves the fervent desire to be spiritually united with Christ; spiritually because we can then receive only the spiritual fruit, that is a very intimate union with Christ, and a share in the spiritual gifts and graces given to those who receive Him sacramentally. If we desire to make a spiritual Communion with the priest at Mass, then we should, after the Pater

noster, sincerely repent of our sins, awaken in ourselves a vivid faith in Christ's presence, a firm confidence in His merits, and a fervent love for Him, and then at the priest's Communion excite an ardent desire to receive Christ and be united to Him. When this is done, we should thank God for the graces we have received and recall to ourselves, during the day, the goodness and love of this divine Saviour, whose pleasure it is to be with the children of men, to enrich them with His blessings.

The Third Form of Devotion consists in placing before our minds, that this holy Sacrifice is a commemoration of Christ's sufferings, and of that great love which He has shown us. Christ foresaw: that if we assisted at this sacrifice, it would be a continual recollection of what He had suffered for us, a powerful incentive to the soul to love Him and serve Him, and for the vivid conception of this, the representation of the ceremonies of the Mass is a great aid. By meditating upon the ceremonies of Mass we are reminded of the whole passion of Christ, and are able to walk, so to speak, the way of His sufferings, as seen by the following

REPRESENTATION IN THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS OF THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

The Priest.	*Christ.*
1. Goes to the altar.	1. Goes to Mount Olivet.
2. Commences Mass.	2. Begins to pray.
3. Says the Confiteor.	3. Falls down and sweat blood.
4. Goes up and kisses the altar.	4. Is betrayed by Judas with a kiss.
5. Goes to the Epistle side.	5. Is captured, bound, and taken to Annas.
6. Reads the Introit.	6. Is falsely accused by Annas and blasphemed.
7. Goes to the middle of the altar and says the Kyrie eleison.	7. Is brought to Caiphas and there three times denied by Peter.
8. Says the Dominus vobiscum.	8. Looks at Peter and converts him.
9. Reads the Epistle.	9. Is brought to Pilate.
10. Says the Munda cor meum at the middle of the altar.	10. Is taken to Herod and mocked.
11. Reads the Gospel.	11. Is taken back to Pilate and again mocked.
12. Uncovers the chalice.	12. Is shamefully exposed.
13. Offers bread and wine.	13. Is cruelly scourged.
14. Covers the chalice.	14. Is crowned with thorns.
15. Washes his hands.	15. Is declared innocent by Pilate.

16. Says the Orate Fratres.	16. Is shown by Pilate to the people with the words, Ecce homo.
17. Prays in a low voice.	17. Is mocked and spit upon.
18. Says the preface and the Sanctus.	18. Is kept instead of Barrabas and condemned to crucifixion.
19. Makes the Memento for the living.	19. Carries the cross to Mount Calvary.
20. Continues to pray in a low voice.	20. Meets His Mother and other pious women.
21. Blesses the bread and wine with the sign of the cross.	21. Is nailed to the cross.
22. Elevates the sacred Host.	22. Is raised on the cross.
23. Elevates the chalice.	23. Sheds blood from the five wounds.
24. Prays in a low voice.	24. Sees His afflicted Mother at the cross.
25. Says aloud, Nobis quoque peccatoribus.	25. Prays on the cross for men.
26. Says aloud the Pater noster.	26. Says the seven words on the cross.
27. Breaks and separates the Host.	27. Gives up His spirit and dies.
28. Lets a small portion of the sacred Host fall into the chalice.	28. Descends in His soul to limbo.
29. Says the Agnus Dei.	29. Is acknowledged on the cross as the Son of God by many bystanders.
30. Administers holy Communion.	30. Is laid in the sepulchre.
31. Cleanses the chalice.	31. Is anointed by pious women.
32. Prepares the chalice again.	32. Arises from the dead.
33. Says the Dominus vobiscum.	33. Appears to His Mother and the disciples.
34. Says the last prayers.	34. Teaches for forty days.
35. Says the last Dominus vobiscum.	35. Takes leave of His disciples and ascends to heaven.
36. Gives the benediction to the people.	36. Sends down the Holy Ghost.
37. Says the Ite Missa est and the last gospel.	37. Sends the apostles into all parts of the world to preach the gospel.

In this manner we can make Christ's passion present before our eyes and unite ourselves with the sufferings of our divine Saviour, which is the leading idea of the holy Mass. We should not fail at every representation to make short acts of love, re-

pentance, humility, submission, and thanksgiving, to all which this mystery incites us.

Whoever assists at the holy Sacrifice of Mass in the ways described, and performs this devotion with deep reverence and attention, with recollection and fervent contrition, will surely not go away empty of graces; for if God is always prepared to share His grace with us, then will He not most willingly give them there where His only begotten Son is the true Lamb of Sacrifice and makes our petitions His own? At the same time it is seen from this, that those who wish the Mass to be said in their own language instead of Latin, complain unnecessarily, for every one can unite himself with the priest and make his offering in his own language, since with God it does not depend upon the language, and there is in most prayer-books an explanation of the ceremonies connected with suitable prayers. The Catholic Church has very wisely retained the Latin as the language of the Mass, as a means of preserving ecclesiastical unity, and Catholics can everywhere acknowledge themselves as such, when they find in every land the same divine service in the same language. The holy Sacrifice would besides be endangered by the introduction of the different languages of the countries in which it is said, because the vernacular is always subjected to changes, would give rise to false interpretations, diminish reverence for the most holy Sacrifice, and might endanger the faith itself, while the Latin language is peculiarly suited to the dignity and majesty of Mass; for it is truly a royal language and is the language of the missionaries who subjected the world to the cross. The celebration of the Mass is not for the instruction of the people somuch as for their edification, and this easily results if each one of the faithful assists with heart and lips, as he best can, at the holy Sacrifice, having the sincere desire to share in all its fruits, which our loving Saviour obtained for us on the cross and wishes to bestow upon us, so that we are enriched by His merits, purified by His most precious blood, nourished and strengthened in the way of virtue by His most sacred body, and are changed from children of wrath to children of God and chosen heirs of heaven.

A GENERAL CONFESSION OF SIN.

I, a poor, sinful man, renounce the evil enemy, all his suggestions, works, and temptations. I believe in God the Father, in God the Son, and in God the Holy Ghost. I also fully believe every thing that the universal Christian Church instructs me to believe. In this faith I confess to God the Almighty, to Mary, His most blessed Mother, and to all the saints, that from the days of my childhood to this very hour, I have sinned often and

much in thought, word, and deed, and in the neglect of good works, and all this either publicly or secretly, voluntarily or unvoluntarily against the Ten Commandments, by the seven deadly sins, the five senses of my body, against God, against my neighbor, against the salvation of my own poor soul. For these and all my sins I am sorry from my heart. Therefore I humbly beseech Thee, Eternal, Merciful God, to grant me Thy divine graces, to prolong my life until I have confessed and done penance for my sins and obtained Thy divine mercy, receiving after this miserable life eternal joy and happiness. I strike my sinful breast and say with the publican: O Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner. Amen.

A PRAYER FOR THE UNIVERSAL NEEDS OF CHRISTIANITY.

ALmighty and Eternal God, Lord and Heavenly Father! Look with eyes of boundless mercy on our misery, distress, and necessity. Have mercy upon all faithful Christians, for whom Thy only begotten Son, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, willingly came into the hands of sinners and shed His precious blood on the tree of the cross. For the sake of this Jesus, O most gracious Father, avert well deserved punishment, present and future dangers, injurious rebellions, famines, diseases, afflictions, and bad seasons. Enlighten and strengthen in all good our spiritual and civil rulers and superiors, that from henceforth all things may redound to Thy divine honor, to our salvation, and to the universal peace and welfare of Christianity.

Grant us, O God of peace, a strong union in faith without discord or separation. Turn our hearts to true penance and amendment of life; inflame us with the fire of Thy love; give us an ardent zeal for all justice, that we may become acceptable to Thee, as obedient children, in life and death.

We beseech Thee also, O God, as Thou dost desire we should, for all our friends and enemies, for the well and the sick, for all afflicted and distressed Christians, for the living and the dead. To Thee, O Lord, we commend all our actions and all our omissions, our employment, our life and death. Let us enjoy Thy grace here, and afterwards receive with the elect eternal joy and happiness, praising and honoring Thee.

This grant us, O Lord, our Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord and Saviour, who lives and reigns with Thee and The Holy Ghost, One God forever. Amen.

ACTS OF THE DIVINE VIRTUES.

Act of Faith.

MY God, I believe in Thee, that Thou art single in nature and threefold in person, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. I believe, that Thou dost reward the good and punish the wicked. I believe, that the Son of God became man, died on the cross for us, and is present in the holy Sacrament of the Altar. I believe, that man's soul is immortal, and God's grace is necessary for salvation. This and all that the Catholic Church teaches, I firmly believe, because Thou, O God, who art infinite truth and wisdom, hast revealed it. In this faith I will live and die.

Act of Hope.

I hope from Thee, O most gracious God, through the merits of Christ, my Redeemer, and by my cooperation with them, for all things good, the forgiveness of my sins, Thy grace and eternal life, because Thou, O almighty, infinitely gracious and faithful God, hast promised this. In this hope may I live and die.

Act of Love.

I love Thee, O most amiable God, with my whole heart above all created things, not only because Thou hast loved me and heaped innumerable favors upon me, but especially because Thou art infinitely worthy of all love for Thy own sake, because Thou art infinitely good. I love my neighbors, my friends, and my enemies as myself for love of Thee, and Thee in them. In this love I will live and die.

Imperfect and Perfect Contrition.

I grieve from the bottom of my heart, O my God, for all the sins of my whole life, because by them I have offended Thee, my greatest Benefactor and strict Judge, and have deserved to be punished by Thee. I am sorry for all the sins of my whole life, above all because by them I have offended God, the highest and only perfect Good, whom I have lost by my sins. I hope for forgiveness through the merits of Jesus, my Saviour, and would rather die than again offend Him.

ALL FOR THE GREATER HONOR OF GOD AND OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY!

MANNER OF HEARING MASS AT HOME

for those who on account of sickness, old age, or for other proper reasons cannot assist at holy Mass, especially on Sundays and Holidays.

PREFATORY REMARKS.

Bear in mind, O Christian soul, that those who would with pleasure be present at the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, if it were possible, such as the sick, the infirm, the aged, fathers and mothers who must remain at home with the little children, and for other reasons, are all included in the holy Sacrifice, that is, take part in the prayers of the Church, in the blessings and merits of the Sacrifice, if they have a sincere desire for it, and, include themselves in the holy Sacrifice.

The holy Sacrifice of the Mass does not belong to any one person, but is offered for all the faithful. As Christ offered Himself for all men on the cross, so He now offers Himself in an unbloody manner for all in the holy Mass, and as He offers the blessing and merits of His sacrifice on the cross to all men, all also have a part in them, who by faith, by hearty desire, by penitent sentiments, and by a life pleasing to God assist at the holy Sacrifice. And if you are kept at home, the priest prays, the Church prays, you Saviour Jesus Christ offers Himself, and the merits and blessing of the holy Sacrifice flow to you, if you only heartily desire it, and unite your prayers at home with the prayers of the priest and the whole congregation. Therefore kneel in spirit before the altar and devoutly make a

GOOD INTENTION.

My Father and my God, Thou knowest how sincerely I would like to assist at the Sacrifice of Thy beloved Son, my Redeemer, which is now being offered to Thee upon the altar by the hands of the priest; but obstacles as Thou knowest,

prevent me. Because I cannot now be present in Thy holy house, do Thou graciously look down upon the desire of my heart, and let me have part in the prayers of Thy holy Church and in the blessing and merits of Thy divine Son, who died for me on the cross, and again offers Himself in an unbloody manner upon the altar. With the same intention with which the priest accomplishes the holy Sacrifice on the altar, I also offer it to Thee for Thy praise and glory, in thanksgiving for all gifts and graces which Thou hast granted me, to reconciliate Thee with me, a poor sinner, and for forgiveness of my sins, and with the most fervent petition, that Thou wilt be to me in my cares and afflictions a gracious Father, and for the sake of Thy Son Jesus not refuse me Thy aid.

O my holy Guardian Angel, do thou stand by my side and unite thy prayers with mine, that they may be acceptable to God's Majesty, and do thou, my beloved Mother Mary, assist me that I may attend in spirit to the unbloody Sacrifice of the Mass with the same intention as thou didst have, when thou didst assist at the bloody Sacrifice of the cross. Amen.

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF MASS TO THE GOSPEL.

My Lord and my God! Creator of heaven and earth, the highest Majesty! how can I presume to raise my hands and pray to Thee? Thou art infinite holiness, in whose sight even the angels are not pure, Thou art the Almighty, before whom even the blessed spirits veil their faces, and I, what am I? Nothing but a poor sinner, a little dust and ashes, who long ago deserved punishment. But Thou art also infinitely gracious and merciful. In the spirit of the deepest contrition and humility, behold, I prostrate myself before Thee with the priest and confess my fault, my great fault, my greatest fault. From my inmost heart I grieve for all my sins and crimes, earnestly beseeching Thee, O my good God and Father, to bestow forgiveness upon me. With the priest I penitently call upon Thee, have mercy on me, O Lord, have mercy on me! Thy mercy is indeed infinitely great, and a contrite heart Thou wilt never despise. And if

my sorrow and contrition are not sufficient, O Father in heaven, then graciously accept the penitent tears of all the holy penitents, the dolors of my beloved Mother Mary under the cross, and the grief of Thy most tender heart for the sins of men. Graciously accept the homage which the Church offers Thee, to which I also add my poor adoration. To Thee, O God on high, be glory! Would that Thou mightest be everywhere glorified! Would that Thy most holy name might be everywhere honored and praised! For this Thou didst send Thine only begotten Son upon earth, for this, that all men might acknowledge Thee, love Thee, learn to serve Thee; and for this Thy divine Son sent His apostles over the whole earth to lead all men to the truth. O give me the grace to always acknowledge the truth which Thy Son brought to earth, and ever more faithfully observe His sacred precepts, that I may be acceptable to Thee and eternally happy. Amen.

FROM THE GOSPEL TO THE CONSECRATION.

Most heartfelt thanks to Thee, O God! for the Catholic faith in which I was born, and which as a little child I received, without any merit of mine, from Thy hands. O how unfortunate would I be, if like so many others I were left to wander in heresy or unbelief, never finding the light of the true faith, which shines only in the Catholic Church, to lead me to heaven! With joy I profess this my holy faith, and beseech Thee, O my God, with all my heart to grant me the grace to live always in accordance with it. For what would it avail me if I should fully believe every truth the Catholic Church teaches, if I did not also faithfully obey it? O my God, do not permit this ever to happen, do not permit me to give ear to false and evil doctrines, which are everywhere spread by vicious men; do not permit me to become weak in faith, do not permit me to be faithless to the promises I have made Thee in Baptism and holy Communion. I desire to be and to remain a child of Thy holy Church, for in this Church alone can I be happy; for she only has all the means of grace for happiness, she alone possesses the fountain of all grace, the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in which Thine only Son, Jesus, offers Himself to Thee, in order to bestow upon us all that His blood won for us on the cross. I see now, in

spirit, the priest standing on the altar with bread and wine in his hands, praying to the Holy Ghost to bless these gifts, that they may be fitted to be changed into the body and blood of Thy beloved Son. I unite my heart to these consecrated gifts of sacrifice, and lay it upon the altar. I possess nothing which I could give to Thee, but a heart which can and will love Thee. O take this poor heart of mine, purify it from all sins and stains, inflame it with the fire of Thy love, and draw it near to Thee, O infinite Goodness, that it may be never more separated from Thee. At the same time I offer to Thee with my heart all its cares and anxieties. Nothing that weighs upon it, is unknown to Thee, O my God, plain before Thy eyes lie all my heart's desires. O do not permit it to desire anything displeasing to Thee, turn it entirely to Thee, and by Thy grace make it ever one with the most loving heart of Thy most loving Son, who, as long as He was upon earth, sought only that Thy will should be done upon earth as in heaven. Amen.

BEFORE THE ELEVATION.

Holy, holy, holy art Thou, O Triune God, and because Thou art infinitely holy, no offering can please Thee as that infinitely holy Sacrifice of Thy Son Jesus, and because Thou art infinitely just, no other Sacrifice can satisfy Thee but this one stainless Sacrifice, which Thy beloved Son accomplished on the cross, and now in an unbloody manner renews upon the altar. For the sake of this holy Sacrifice now being accomplished on the altar, I beseech Thee, O God in heaven, to graciously look down upon all true Christians and preserve them in the unity of faith and love; permit the light of truth to shine for all unbelievers and heretics, give Thy good Spirit to the pope, our common father and head, to the bishops and priests, that they may lead the souls entrusted to them, in the way of salvation to heaven, give the grace of conversion to all poor sinners, console the afflicted, strengthen the weak, guide the erring, steady the wavering, and graciously hear the prayers of those who supplicate Thee. Remember, O best Father, my poor soul, also, bought by Thy divine Son with His blood. I confess in deepest humility and most profund sorrow, that I have often stained that

soul with sin and by transgressing Thy holy commandments; give me but one drop of that Most Precious Blood, and it will become pure and pleasing to Thee. Thou knowest my desire to serve Thee with all faithfulness, O give me Thy grace, always to do Thy holy will; assist me, that I may always follow the beautiful virtues of Thy beloved Son, His humility, His peacefulness, and become thus always more and more pleasing to Thee. Do not forsake me, O merciful Father, in my crosses and afflictions, and in the heavy cares which weigh upon my heart. Give me strength to bear them, and cause all to redound to Thy honor and the salvation of my own poor soul. Aid me now, O most blessed Virgin and Mother of God, and all you saints in heaven, in this most solemn hour, when Jesus, the Lamb of God, offers Himself with your petitions, that my prayers may be heard at the throne of God, before which you stand, singing hymns of praise. You have won and are now happy, we must yet suffer and fight, aid us, that through Christ, our Saviour, we may conquer the enemies of our salvation and meet with you in heaven. Amen.

AT THE ELEVATION.

Most merciful Heavenly Father! Thou hast given us Thy beloved Son Jesus, and with Him all. He, Thine only Son, is now my possession, He is now present on the altar, and I presume to draw near to Him, presume to offer Him to Thee for Thy glory, in thanksgiving for all Thy graces, for forgiveness of my sins, and for the obtaining of new graces which I so much need. A thousand thanks to Thee for having given us Thy beloved Son, through whom we poor sinners have access to Thee; through Him, my Jesus, I offer to Thy great Majesty my heart, my body, my soul, everything that I am or have. I offer Thee His infinite merits for my poverty, His infinite virtues for my sinfulness, the holiness of His life upon earth for my crimes, His Most Precious Blood as my appeal for mercy. Have mercy on me, O Father in Heaven, have mercy on me! Forgive me all my offences, and permit to be and remain Thy child. Amen.

AFTER THE ELEVATION.

How infinitely great, O my most loving Jesus, how perfectly incomprehensible is Thy love for us weak men who can do nothing but sin! It was not enough for Thee to die on the cross with unutterable agonies for us, and by that bloody Sacrifice reconcile us sinners with Thy just Father, opening heaven to us, but Thou wouldst daily renew it on our altars, wouldst daily descend from heaven, changing the bread into Thy Sacred Body and the wine into Thy most Precious Blood, presenting to our eyes Thy death upon the cross and giving us all its merits. O who can comprehend this Thine infinite love? And how ungrateful we are to Thee for it! Instead of loving Thee in return, instead of doing everything which is pleasing to Thee, instead of following Thee and becoming always more like Thee, we insult Thee, nail Thee anew by our sins to the cross, drive Thee from us, and follow the broad way of the world, which leads to destruction. I also, O my most loving Saviour, am one of these ingrates; O forgive me, for I am indeed sorry from my whole heart for having acted so ungratefully towards Thee. In deepest humility I fall down before Thee, confessing my offences, give me but a drop of Thy most Precious Blood, that I may be purified. Look upon me with the eyes of Thy boundless mercy, and give me the grace to love Thee with my whole heart and faithfully to serve Thee. Yes, I love Thee, O Jesus, I love Thee, and will always love Thee. Remember also, O most faithful Jesus, those who have departed from this world in faith in Thee and Thy most holy Church, remember my (parents, relations) friends, benefactors; let them share in the merits of Thy most Precious Blood, that they may obtain consolation and comfort in the tortures of purgatory and soon arrive at redemption. Amen.

AT THE PRIEST'S COMMUNION.

O Jesus, how unutterable is Thy love for man! Thou art not only willing to bestow upon him the merits of Thy holy Sacrifice, but desirest to give Thyself entirely to him, to nourish and strengthen his soul by Thy most Sacred Body and Blood, uniting Thyself wholly with him. How infinitely

great is Thy condescension to us, Thy poor creatures! Thou who art infinite Holiness, the Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Lord of legions, desirest to come to us and dwell with us! Who could believe it, if Thou hadst not said it? Since it is, then, certain and true, that Thou dost visit us and dwell in our hearts, I will presume, poor sinner though I am, to draw near to Thee, to unite myself with the priest and earnestly pray and beseech Thee, O Jesus! Come to me! I am not worthy, but Thy great goodness, Thy great mercy permits me to hope, that Thou wilt not refuse to deign to come into my poor heart. I cannot, it is true, now actually receive Thee, Thy Sacred Body and Blood, with the priest, but Thou canst come to me with Thy effective grace to console, strengthen, purify, and sanctify my soul. Come, then, O Jesus, sole desire of my heart! Behold, I dedicate my heart to Thee, may it love only Thee! I dedicate my soul to Thee, may it think only of Thee and be acceptable to Thee! I dedicate my body and all its members to Thee, that they may be used only in doing good. Come, O Jesus, and make me entirely Thine, for Thee I desire to live and to die. Amen.

FROM THE COMMUNION TO THE BENEDICTION.

Thou hast now, O most tender Jesus, finished Thy most holy Sacrifice, Thou hast given Thyself for the honor and glory of Thy Heavenly Father, and called at His throne for grace and mercy for us. Thou hast permitted the merits of Thy most holy Sacrifice to flow into our souls. How can I thank Thee enough for it? For if I had the tongues of all the angels, I could not sufficiently praise Thee. Since I have not the power, I offer Thee the praise, adoration, and thanks of Thy holy Mother Mary and of all the saints, earnestly beseeching Thee to supply from Thy own loving heart all that I, in my poverty, cannot give Thee. Thou hast given me the grace, O Heavenly Father, to offer Thee Thy divine Son in union with the priest and the congregation, to adore and praise Thee, and to presume to offer Thee the price of the forgiveness of my sins. Thanks be to Thee for this grace. May I stand always firmly in faith in Thee and in Him, Thy only begotten Son, whom Thou hast sent, may my trust in

Thee never become weakened and may I never cease to love Thee as long as I live! Amen.

AT THE BENEDICTION.

May † God the Father, † the Son, and † the Holy Ghost bless me. Strengthened by this blessing, I will seek to-day and at all times to do Thy will, O Holy Trinity. I desire not only to be called Thy child, O Heavenly Father, but to be Thy child, always and at all times to fulfil Thy commandments with filial obedience. I desire not only to be Thy disciple, O Jesus, but to be Thy faithful disciple. I wish to be humble and meek, like Thee, at peace with all men, always preserving purity of body and soul, and merciful to all my fellowmen, friends, and enemies alike. I will cheerfully follow Thy inspirations, O Divine Spirit, faithfully use the graces, with which Thou overloadest me, depart from sin, and live for virtue. O Mary, blessed Mother of my Saviour, pray for me and assist me to keep my resolutions. Take me, and all for whom I am bound to pray and all my friends, under thy protection and lead us to the heaven, where thou livest in splendor, that with thee and the saints we may always love and praise the Triune God. Amen.

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of the

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